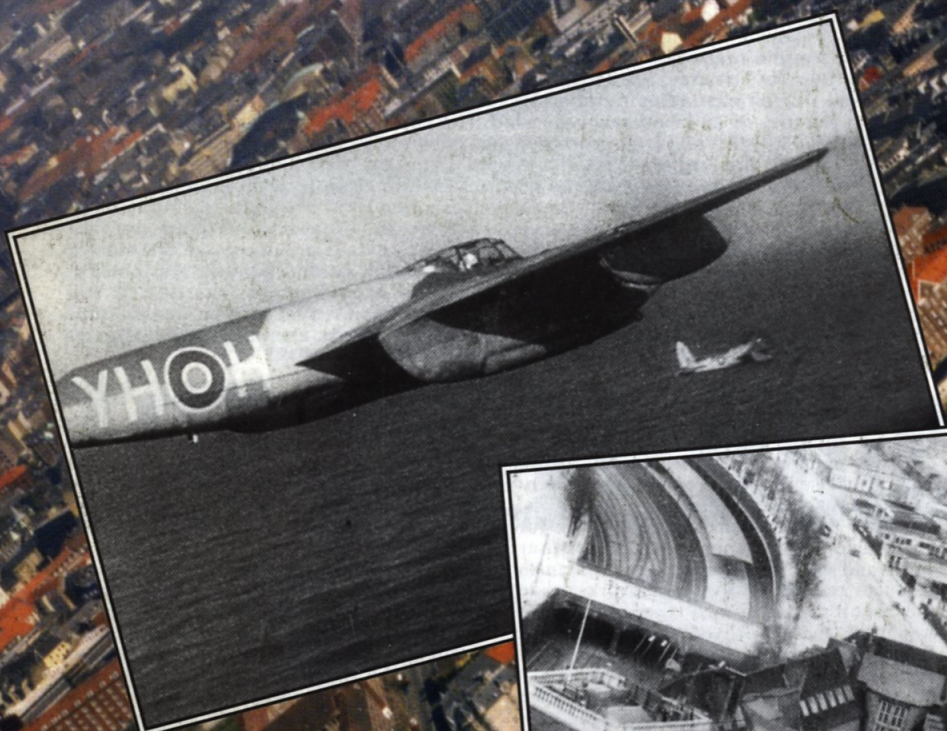
AFTER THE BATTLE

SHELL HOUSE



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Front Cover: The raid on the Gestapo headquarters in Copenhagen — contemporary shots taken in March 1945 set against a present-day oblique taken on the approach route to the Shell House. (Jens Ottesen)

Centre Pages: The sinking of the *Arizona* — then, and as recreated in Jerry Bruckheimer's new film *Pearl Harbor*. (Touchstone Pictures)

Back Cover: Unique tribute to Pilot Officer Vernon Byers who failed to return from the attack on the Ruhr Dams — see page 52. (Doug Chisholm)

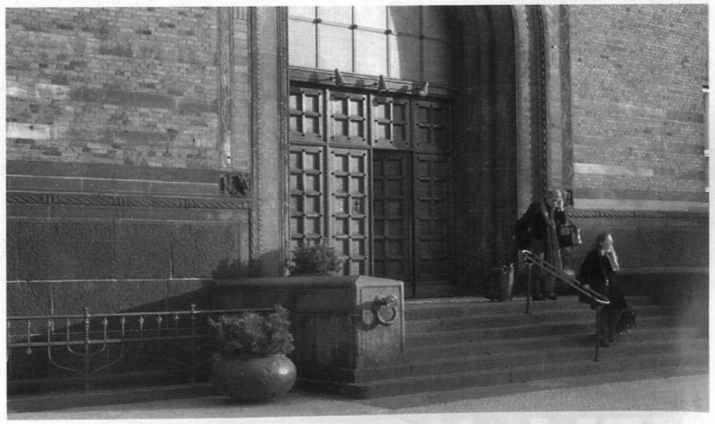
Photo Credits: AWM — Australian War Memorial, Canberra. IWM — Imperial War Museum, London. MDR — Museum of Danish Resistance 1940-1945, Copenhagen.

With its avowed neutrality reinforced by a treaty of friendship with Germany, the invasion of Denmark in April 1940 came as a rude awakening. To avoid any provocation of its powerful neighbour the country had even reduced its number of soldiers under arms and a mere 15,000 men were available to resist the German landings in the early hours of Tuesday, April 9. Most of the troops laid down their arms without a fight, total Danish casualties numbering 13 killed and 23 wounded, German forces suffering the loss of 20 killed and wounded. The capital Copenhagen was buzzed by low-flying German bombers as the troopship *Hansestadt Danzig* carrying an assault battalion passed the Danish coastal batteries without a shot being fired at her. She tied up at a pier in the heart of the city where the troops disembarked to head straight for the Citadel, location of the Danish General Staff headquarters which had previously been reconnoitred by General Kurt Himer, the Chief-of-Staff of the German task force, who had visited the city in plain clothes two days previously. Just before 6 a.m King Christian agreed to capitulate and surrender Denmark's military installations and to hand over control of the press and broadcasting facilities to the Germans. In return, he was promised that the Third Reich would respect Danish neutrality, allow the government to continue, and maintain its army and navy. *Above:* **German officers outside Copenhagen's City Hall on April 9. (MDR)**

Regardless of a non-aggression treaty signed by Germany and Denmark in May 1939, on April 9, 1940 German armed forces crossed the frontier in Jutland and at the same time disembarked from ships in Copenhagen, and several other harbour towns. Germany had been making preparations for an invasion of Denmark for at least four years and used this time to spy on Danish defences and to set up secret networks inside the country. The Danish armed resistance was futile and short lived and within hours the Danish government had given orders for surrender.

Denmark was declared by Germany to be a 'Model Protectorate' and the Germans stated that they would respect Danish neutrality and refrain from interfering in internal affairs. In return, the Danes had to surrender military installations, press and radio freedom, and external communications, and to suspend all relations with Germany's enemies. However the Danish armed forces and police were allowed to remain intact, and the King and his government permitted to continue to govern.

Most Danes accepted the German occupation sullenly but, even so, resistance organisations quickly began to take root. In the following five years the Resistance gained strength, destroying any co-operation between the Danes and the occupiers, and nearly succeeded in stopping logistic communications with Norway. At the same time it tied down large German military forces needed elsewhere.



Douglas Hinton, our author, matched the photo in April 2000.

THE SHELL HOUSE RAID

By Douglas Hinton

Ebbe Munck, war correspondent for the Copenhagen newspaper *Berlingske Tidende*, Denmark's oldest newspaper, heard the news of the occupation while in Finland. He felt that Denmark must resist the occupiers, and if the Danish government would not act, the Danish people themselves must take action. Munck returned to Denmark and in secret made contact with officers of the military intelligence service. With the co-operation of this organisation which became known as 'The League', a network was arranged to collect information on all enemy troop movements and shipping, and the means of communicating this information to Sweden was put in place. Munck then took the position as correspondent for *Berlingske Tidende* in Stockholm. There he made contact with the British and arranged to send the intelligence material to England. His reports started in the latter half of 1940 and continued for the duration of the war.

While Munck was setting up his intelligence organisation, the Special Operations Executive was being created in London with the purpose of supporting subversive activity in enemy-occupied territory. The leader of the Scandinavian section of SOE, Charles Hambro, went to Stockholm to confer with Munck and they agreed on an outline for SOE policy for Denmark. The agreement was that the existing intelligence network would be under Danish control and that the SOE was to give support, to provide training, and to supply radio equipment and weapons as the Resistance movement grew. In its policy towards Denmark, SOE also hoped to destroy any co-operation between the Germans and the Danish government. However, the first priority of the movement was intelligence gathering and sabotage, although actions were to be kept low-key until strength was built up.

After the occupation of Denmark, the first embryo resistance organisation was set up by Ebbe Munck. (MDR)

One crucial element in the Resistance's success, was that of propaganda to waken the Danish people from their passivity. The means of doing this was through the illegal press and broadcasts by the BBC. The underground press began in the first week of occupation and grew into the most powerful tool of organised resistance. The BBC at first confined itself to war news, the activities of Danes abroad, and other such topics, as it would have been disastrous for the broadcasts to excite sabotage and resistance before the movement had gained sufficient strength to carry it out.

The Danish government was successful in resisting most demands during the first year of occupation, but thereafter the Germans began to drop their policy of allowing Danish self-government, and to increase the force of their requirements. When the Danish government resisted, Germany countered by threatening to cut off all supplies of fuel and coal of which Denmark had no natural resources. The arrogance of the occupiers continued to grow and, when conciliation did not give the required results, force was employed, but far from destroying the Danish will to resist, the Germans instead destroyed Danish apathy.

Left: **German guards on duty outside the Royal Palace. (MDR)** *Right:* **Time marches on in Copenhagen but the face of Amalienborg Castle remains unchanged.**

In January 1943, the RAF began to bomb targets in Denmark. German military installations were attacked and on January 27 the shipbuilding yards of Burnmeister and Wain, which produced diesel engines for German U-Boats, were bombed in Copenhagen. These raids were welcomed in Denmark and the Danish public openly showed their pro-Allied feelings. Before long acts of sabotage increased, alarming the Germans as most of it was carried out against firms producing war material.

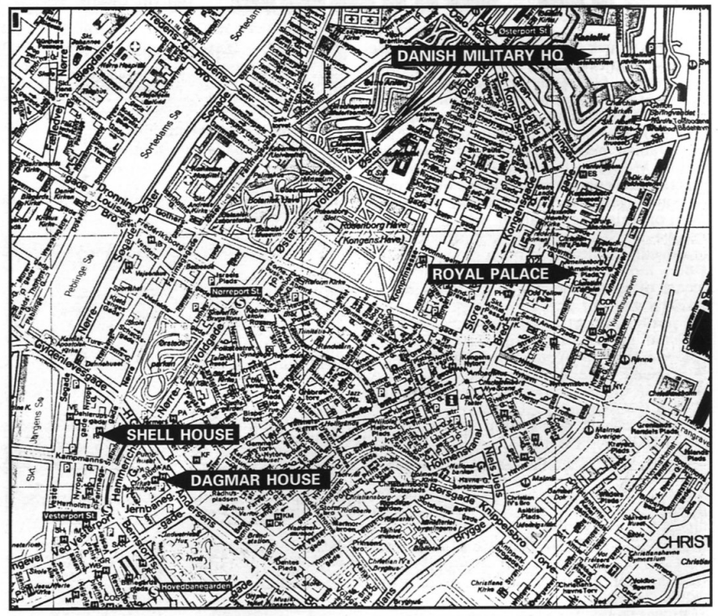
Co-operation between SOE and the Danish military resistance organisation became less important at this time, because The League did not want to be involved in active sabotage and they were also vulnerable if the Germans took action against the Danish military (which, in fact, later happened). Instead SOE decided to give more support to civilian groups. These groups received shipments of arms and training and a countrywide resistance organisation came into being, supported by 18 SOE agents.

During the summer of 1943 the strength of the resistance groups continued to increase with a steady supply of arms and by weapons manufactured in secret workshops or stolen from the Germans. In July there was an average of three acts of sabotage a day and in August these doubled. The Germans countered this increase by sending in the Gestapo to destroy the Resistance and to cower the population. Nevertheless, despite increasingly harsh methods used by the Gestapo, the will to resist continued to grow.

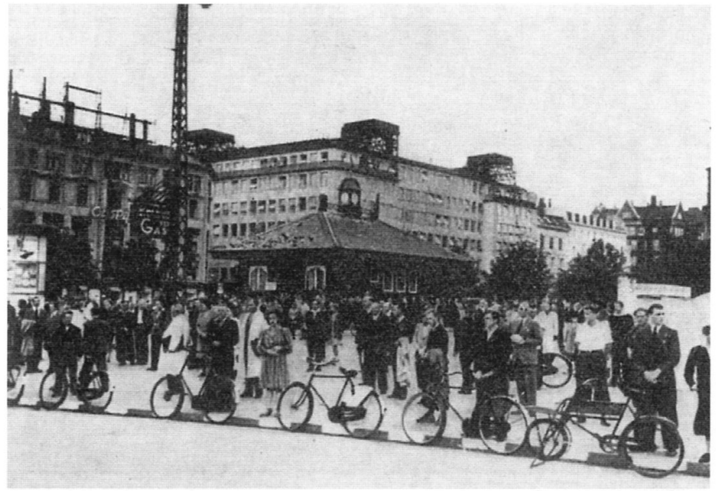
Dr Werner Best had been appointed as Hitler's plenipotentiary in Denmark in November 1942. He advised a moderate policy in dealing with the Danes but was overruled by Berlin. Open insurrection broke out in several towns, most notably in Odense, Esbjerg, and Aalborg, and these riots and strikes soon spread to Copenhagen. Consequently, Berlin sent orders to Dr Best to take over the Danish government. On August 28, 1943, total control was passed to the Wehrmacht, thus achieving SOE's wish of a total break between the Germans and the Danish government.

On the morning of August 29, the people of Denmark awoke to find German guards at all public buildings and the King a prisoner. Army and Navy personnel were made prisoners of war, although before the Germans could get control of the royal dockyards, several naval vessels were scuttled and other ships at sea were either sunk or sailed to Sweden. Only the police were still left untouched.

With the removal of the Danish government, people were freed to act according to conscience, unfettered by official decrees. The Germans were aware of this and tried — but failed — to form a new government. However, in order that the administration of the country could continue, an agreement was made that civil servants would stay in their posts. After the government was disbanded several Danish patriots met on September 16 and formed the Freedom Council. Although the composition of the Council changed from time to time as members were arrested or had to flee to Sweden, for the remainder of the occupation Denmark was governed by this secret underground committee, whose members were unknown to the public until after the war.



Dr Werner Best *(left)* **was appointed the Reich's 'Protector' in Denmark in November 1942 but Berlin's new hard line against the increasing resistance led to the Gestapo being ordered into Copenhagen in May 1943. Their first HQ was in the Dagmar House on Radhuspladsen which had been taken over by the Wehrmacht but in March 1944 the Gestapo commandeered the headquarters of the Shell oil company — the Shell House — on Kampmannsgade (illustrated on page 3). (MRD)**



On July 12, 1944, the people of the city observed two minutes silence in response to a plea by the Danish Freedom Council to demonstrate against the arrest and execution of resistance operatives. Here Danes stand defiantly with their backs to the German (and Gestapo) headquarters in Dagmar House. On the roof can be seen the flak positions which were attacked by the Mustangs during the raid on the Shell House the following year. (MDR)

On October 1, the Germans moved to intern the Danish Jews. Danish leaders, however, had been forewarned by Georg Ferdinand Duckwitz, a German official, who learned of the plan from Dr Best and the warning enabled nearly all of the Jews to go into hiding. Adolf Eichmann arrived on October 3 to direct the roundup and by the end of October, 472 Jews had been captured. However, more than 7,000 were still in hiding, and in an attempt to locate them, General der Infanterie Hermann von Hanneken, the Wehrmacht leader in Denmark, offered to release senior Danish military officers who had been arrested on August 29. His offer of reciprocation was refused but, regardless of this, he shortly afterwards released thousands of Danish military prisoners thus providing the resistance movement with many new well-trained recruits.

When the invasion in Normandy began on June 6, 1944, the Danish resistance received orders from SOE to go into action on a large scale and in one attack the Globus factory in Copenhagen, which made aircraft parts for the Germans, was totally destroyed. Other raids were carried out all over the country. The Germans reacted savagely and began the summary execution of arrested saboteurs and hostages. Dr Best declared a state of emergency in Copenhagen, including a curfew between the hours of 8 p.m. and 5 a.m., and immediately 10,000 workers at the shipyards of Burnmeister and Wain went on strike. Dr Best declared their action illegal, but this only inflamed other workers who promptly joined the strike. Soon the whole city of Copenhagen was in open rebellion. Thousands thronged the streets looting pro-German shops, erecting barricades and attacking German soldiers. The Germans demanded that the strikes end, but the only group with the power to bring a return to order was the Freedom Council. The Council presented a list of demands to which the Germans were forced to agree, including the end of the state of emergency, before the strikers would return to their workplaces.

During the rebellion, several German divisions were in the process of being moved from Denmark and Norway to France to help stem the Allied invasion and the strike by the railway workers and sabotage of the network in Jutland caused serious delays. The track had to be double guarded at 200-metre intervals which necessitated even more soldiers to be sent from Germany at a time when they could hardly be spared. Even so, the Germans had to give up use of the railways in northern Jutland as the tracks were blown up quicker than they could be repaired.

The Danish police had turned a blind eye to the strikes and sometimes even joined the strikers. The Germans disbanded the police force and any policemen considered likely to join the Resistance were deported to German concentration camps.

'City Hall Square' 60 years later with the town hall now minus its AA protection!

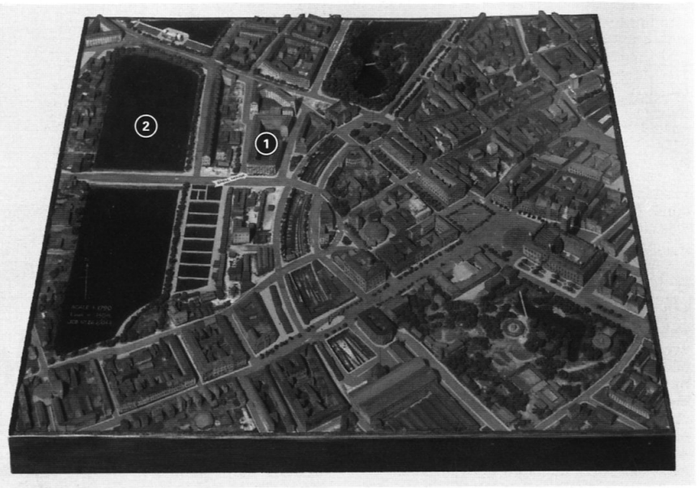
To quell the protest which was feared could lead to open insurrection, the Germans even deployed troops with artillery.

This is the corner of Borgergade and Klerkegade, a couple of streets west of the Royal Palace . . . then and now. (MDR)

The greatest threat to the resistance movement were the Gestapo headquarters in Copenhagen, Aarhus, and Odense. They were the centres for investigation and interrogation of suspected resistance fighters and the repositories of an efficient filing system of personnel records and data on the resistance. The situation for the movement in Jutland became so serious that the resistance groups were under threat of being destroyed. Something had to be done to try to help their plight.

On February 18, 1944, 18 Mosquitos of Nos., 21, 464 and 487 Squadrons of No. 140 Wing took off from Hunsdon in three waves of six, escorted by Typhoons of No. 198 Squadron and crossed the Channel at wave-top height. Their target was a prison at Amiens where about 700 prisoners, many of them members of the French resistance, were being held. The mission was to demolish the walls and break open the prison to allow as many as possible to escape. The attack was so accurate that the last wave of six Mosquitos did not need to release its bombs. The French underground reported the escape of 258 prisoners although 102 prisoners were killed, many of them being shot by the guards as they attempted to escape. (See *After the Battle* No. 28.)

The success of this raid became known throughout Europe and before long other resistance groups were asking for similar help, and on April 11 six Mosquitos attacked the building housing the Gestapo archives in The Hague in the Netherlands, totally destroying the records. In Jutland, the Danish underground was taking severe blows from the Gestapo which had its headquarters



Low-level raids had already been successfully mounted by RAF Mosquitos against the Gestapo headquarters in Holland at The Hague and in Denmark in the Jutland city of Aarhus in the April and October of 1944. In May that year, the Danish resistance had requested that the Shell House [1] in Copenhagen be added as another possible target but an attack was not approved by London. However, when in February 1945 a mortal blow was dealt to the movement by the sudden arrest of nearly all its top men, an urgent request was made to retaliate as soon as possible by hitting the building to destroy records and kill its personnel. This model (now at the Imperial War Museum at Duxford) was constructed to brief the crews on the layout of that part of the city east of the enclosed waterway, the Saint Jørgen's Lake [2]. (IWM)

Our sortie was flown specially for us in May 2001 with the Shell House [1] visible just east of the bridge [2] on Kampmannsgade.

in Aarhus, Denmark's second largest city, in buildings expropriated from the university, where about 100 Gestapo officials and staff had their workplace and archives. The Jutland resistance requested that the Aarhus Gestapo buildings be bombed, and on October 31, 1944, 24 Mosquitos from the same squadrons that raided Amiens were detailed for the attack. The raid was very successful, for not only were the Gestapo buildings razed and the records destroyed, but the Gestapo from all over Jutland were holding a conference at the moment of the attack and casualties among them were very heavy. (See *After the Battle* No. 54.)

The squadrons taking part in the Aarhus raid were from No. 2 Group of the Second Tactical Air Force, commanded since May 1943 by Group Captain Basil Embry, one of Britain's most distinguished airmen. He flew every type of aircraft in his command and decided that the Mosquito Mark VI was the most effective, and soon he was able to re-equip six of his squadrons with this type. After his experience in leading raids, Embry felt that there was the need for special training and better preparation for low-level attacks. He established his own section to make scale models of the target areas, thus speeding up preparations and increasing security. When called on to destroy a single target, his aircrews studied these models, squinting at them from a low angle to give the impression that they were approaching the target at roof-top height. Sometimes the models were photographed and copies given to the crews to help them locate the target. Maps were also prepared showing routes to the target and the position of anti-aircraft defences.

The Gestapo had arrived in Copenhagen in May 1943, setting up their headquarters in the Dagmarhus building in the city centre but by March 1944 they needed more space so the nearby Shell House was commandeered. Other neighbouring buildings were also taken over, including the offices of the Association of Engineers (Ingeniørhuset), which formed the northern continuation of the east wing of the Shell House.

The Shell House was built in 1934 of steel-reinforced concrete in the shape of a shallow U. Its longest facade faced south along Kampmannsgade and there were two shorter wings, one facing west on Nyropsgade and the other facing east on Vester Farimagsgade. On each of the corners on Kampmannsgade there were two huge glass windows giving light to the main staircase and on the outside of the building the Gestapo had installed screen walls with firing slits and barbed-wire barricades. The building had five floors and also a cellar and attic.

From September 1943, Karl Heinz Hoffmann was Gestapo chief in Denmark but control of the German police activity was divided between the Höherer SS- und Polizeiführer (Higher SS and Police Leader) SS-Obergruppenführer Günther Pancke, who took orders from Himmler, and the notorious Standartenführer Otto Bovensiepen who was subordinate to Ernst Kaltenbrunner, the Gestapo chief in Berlin. Assisted by experts of specialist departments and a large staff they began to assemble files about the resistance movement. Card index systems were used to store names, descriptions, photographs, aliases, and every other known detail of all Danes suspected or wanted by the Gestapo. Prisoners were kept in cells in the Vestre Fængsel (Western Prison) and brought to the Shell House for interrogation. At first the cellars were used to torture uncooperative captives so that their screams would not disturb the staff working above but later interrogations and torture were carried out on the fourth and fifth floors. A number of Danish Nazis assisted the Gestapo and others received training at the Shell House to infiltrate the

Berlingske Tidende

196. ÅRGANG — KØBENHAVN, TIRSDAG MORGEN DEN 2. DECEMBER 1944 — NUMMER 325

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Fortsat Bevægelses-Krig i Elsass-Lothringen

Stærk tysk Artillerikoncentration og kraftigt tysk Luftforsvar har vanskeliggjort de Allieredes Angreb ved Aachen

Tyskland stærkeste Artillerikoncentration under Krigen

Chaufføren havde ikke Kørekort. Bremserne var i Uorden, Styretøjet defekt, Karrosseriet løst

Hvad Undersøgelserne i den frygtelige Lunde-Ulykke viste

Statsanstalten bygger Administrationsbygning til 10 Millioner

Projekt, som skal udføres efter Krigen

Arkitekterne Frits Schlegel og Mogens Lassen har udarbejdet Skitseforslagene

Strenge Domme for Røveri

Ran- og Røveri-Erstatninger udbetales med Forbehold

Særligt Risiko-Tillæg til Præmierne og Begrænsning af Dækningssummernes Størrelse

The RAF were anxious to obtain an up-to-date picture of the building and the Danish Resistance provided this in a very clever way — on the front page of Danish national newspaper! Copies of the paper were regularly sent to Britain from neutral Sweden and its editor included the shot under the guise of illustrating a feature about the building of a new government building — outlined on the left of the picture. The German censor failed to appreciate the significance of the prominent building on the right — and thus its fate was sealed!

resistance and inform against their compatriots. Not many prisoners passed through Gestapo hands without being tortured. The underground operated on the rule that if a member was arrested all code-names, addresses and meeting places were immediately changed. Consequently, the interrogations were usually most severe in the first 48 hours after capture because any information obtained later would most likely be out of date.

As an insurance that the Shell House would not suffer the same fate as the Aarhus HQ, the Gestapo had cells built under the attic space together with cooking, storage, and washing facilities. There were 22 cells for hostages and six holding cells. Most held two prisoners, although sometimes the 'prisoners' were Danish informers put there to try and pick up information from the hostages. The cells themselves measured 3 metres by 2 metres, with one small window measuring 20 by 10 centimeters. Each cell had a two-tiered bunk bed, a table with drawers, and two wooden chairs. A single 15-watt bulb was provided.

The Germans moved captives in as soon as cells were built, even as construction was taking place on the other cells. On September 2, Aage Schoch, a member of the Freedom Council, was captured and held in one of the attic cells. Schoch expected he would be executed but being made a hostage perhaps saved his life. Also some of the shrewder Gestapo leaders may now have acted less ruthlessly than they would have previously with the realisation that Germany was losing the war. Mogens Fog, another Freedom Council member, was arrested on October 14 and also taken to the Shell House.

Fleming Muus, who was the contact man between the Freedom Council and SOE, had to go underground after Georg Duckwitz warned him that the Gestapo knew a great deal about him and his work. Also on December 1, a report from Bovensiepen to

At the time of the raid, the liaison between the resistance movement in Denmark and the Special Operations Executive in Britain, the body which had to ultimately sanction the raid, was Ole Lippmann. It was he who would have the responsibility of requesting that an attack on the Shell House be carried out — a difficult decision because the Germans were using their prisoners in cells right at the top of the building as human shields against another Aarhus-type operation by the RAF.

Berlin fell into Resistance hands. This showed that the Gestapo had considerable knowledge about SOE in Denmark and even more about Fleming Muus, including his real name. As a result, Muus was ordered by SOE to flee Denmark and return to Britain. He was replaced at first by Herman Dedichen and later in February 1945 by Ole Lippmann.

Meanwhile, the Resistance in Copenhagen continued to plan for the liberation — not only by carrying out sabotage operations, but later in training for regular military combat to support a possible Allied beach-head.

On February 26, 1945 the Gestapo struck again when the regional military leader in Copenhagen, Colonel E. V. C. Tiemroth, was arrested, together with another Freedom Council member, Professor Brandt Rehberg. The capture of Tiemroth was very dangerous as he had detailed knowledge of the Resistance over the whole country.

In his report sent to SOE headquarters in London on March 4, Lippmann wrote that it had been a very black week in Denmark. The Gestapo's efficiency had improved markedly over the last few months and a great damage had been done to the network in Copenhagen. He also said that he had still not been able to get a clear picture of the current situation. A week later Lippmann signalled: 'This has been the blackest of black periods. All military leaders have been captured. Also all the Resistance action plans have fallen into German hands, and without doubt the Gestapo knows of the whole Resistance organisation'.

The Gestapo had struck so quickly that the Resistance movement in Copenhagen was in shock as almost all the leaders had been arrested at the same time. After the wave of arrests, Lippmann telephoned three different contact telephones only to find that all three were answered by the Gestapo. Although a new leadership was established within a few days, many excellent operatives had been lost, and all the knowledge that they possessed was now in the Shell House which would undoubtedly lead to more arrests. It was at this point that the decision had to be made to destroy the building.

However, bombing the Shell House was not a new idea. It had already been requested back in May 1944 when photos, drawings, and details of German air defences in the area were sent to London. Although SOE had given the proposal the thumbs down, even so they asked for further details of the air defences in the area. The Gestapo's increased activity in the latter half of 1944 gave still more strength to the request. If the Gestapo archives could be destroyed and the leading German security people killed, much could still be saved, even though the presence of the prisoners on the top floor made it a difficult decision. Plans produced in Denmark for the attack, including maps, drawings, and a diagram showing the safest and best routes over Zealand, and showing the roads leading to the target in the city centre, arrived in England on December 7, 1944.

London replied that it could not make any promises but asked for detailed photo material of the Shell House and the surrounding area and to be continually informed of the Gestapo activities, and of the positions of the anti-aircraft defences. Lippmann, who returned to Copenhagen around February 10, 1945, had the responsibility of deciding the necessity for the destruction of the Shell House as Embry wanted a clear guarantee that the attack was needed from a person in a 'responsible position in the field'. Embry was well aware that the prisoners' lives were at risk and that civilian casualties could be heavy.

It is likely that several unconnected requests for the destruction of the building came from Copenhagen but it was Lippmann who had to make and send the final decision to London. At the end of February the Resistance intercepted a telephone call between the Polizeiführer Dänemark, Günther Pancke, and SS-Brigadeführer and Generalmajor der Polizei Hans Flade, the head of the Ordnungspolizei main office in Berlin. The conversation overheard concerned an action in the near future under Pancke's leadership. General Flade had asked for 'the action' to be delayed because Himmler wanted to consider it more. Pancke was disappointed and said that it wasn't wise to delay. What action Pancke planned was not known but the Resistance had good reason to fear the worst so Lippmann decided to ask for the attacks to go ahead. When the final request arrived in London, plans for the raid had already been laid; now only the weather held back its execution.

N O R T H
S E A
AARHUS
COPENHAGEN
SWANTON MORLEY
FERSFIELD
Hull to Hamburg 386 m.
Leith to Hamburg 464 m.
Newcastle to Hamburg 432 m.
Hull to Copenhagen 412 m.
London to Copenhagen 664 m.
Leith to Amsterdam 370 m.
Hull to Amsterdam 300 m.
Hull to Esbjerg 387 m.
Norwich to Esbjerg 280 m.
Hull to Kristiansand 412 m.
London to Kristiansand 648 m.
Newcastle to Esbjerg 360 m.
Leith to Esbjerg 397 m.
Hull to Rotterdam 122 m.
Hoek van Holland
Helgoland
Heligoland
Berwick
Newcastle
Hartlepool
Scarborough
Whitby
Middlesbrough
Sunderland
Durham
Leeds
York
Harrogate
Ripon
Malton
Beverley
Hull
Grimsby
Lincoln
Boston
Skegness
Newark
Nottingham
Derby
Sheffield
Doncaster
Gainsborough
Scunthorpe
Peterborough
Cambridge
Ipswich
Colchester
Norwich
Yarmouth
Lowestoft
Thetford
Swaffham
Wisbech
Ely
Bury St Edmunds
Newmarket
Chelmsford
Harwich
Clacton
Southend
Maldon
Tilbury
Gravesend
Dartford
Canterbury
Ashford
Folkestone
Dover
Hastings
Eastbourne
Brighton
Worthing
Chichester
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Woking
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Tunbridge Wells
Maidstone
Sittingbourne
Margate
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Hertford
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Edmonton
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Wimbledon
Richmond
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Hounslow
Heathrow
Staines
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Uxbridge
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Hampstead
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Watford
St Albans
Hemel Hempstead
Berkhamsted
Tring
Leighton Buzzard
Bedford
Kettering
Corby
Wellingborough
Northampton
Daventry
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Coventry
Leamington
Warwick
Stratford-upon-Avon
Evesham
Worcester
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Wolverhampton
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Stourbridge
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West Bromwich
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Haddington
Musselburgh
Edinburgh
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Falkirk
Stirling
Perth
Dundee
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Campbeltown
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Kilmarnock
Glasgow
Paisley
Greenock
Dumbarton
Helensburgh
Rothesay
Stranraer
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Londonderry
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Westport
Clifden
Roundstone
Letterfrack
Kylemore
Connemara
Aran Islands
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Lough Erne
Lough Ree
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Lough Corrib
Lough Mask
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Lough Foyle
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Kilrush
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Roscrea
Thurles
Cashel
Tipperary
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Carrick-on-Suir
Kilkenny
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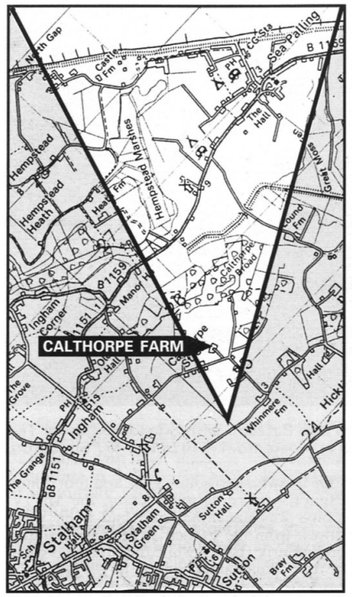


After leaving Fersfield, the formation headed north-eastwards to cross the Norfolk coast near Stalheim. Two Mosquitos from No. 21 Squadron were acting as camera aircraft for the Film Photographic Unit: Flight Lieutenant K. L. Greenwood with Flying Officer Moore behind the camera and Flying Officer Kirkpatrick with Sergeant Hearne as his camera operator. This is a still from Moore's film as the aircraft leave Britain — Calthorpe Farm lies directly beneath the Mosquito on the left. (IWM)

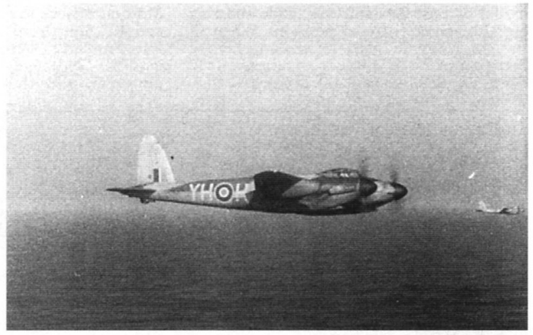
He stated that the hostages expected to be executed and would prefer to die in an RAF raid rather than continue to be tortured and shot later by the Germans. He also instructed the aircrews that if they were forced down they should make for a forested park, known as the Deer Park, 12 kilometres due north of the target, where they should wait to be contacted by the Resistance.

While Truelsen briefed the crews they were joined by Group Captain Embry and his navigator, Squadron Leader Peter Clapham. Embry was wearing the uniform of a wing commander and was introduced as Wing Commander Smith. Embry was in fact forbidden to undertake operational flights as he had been captured earlier in the war and, although he had escaped, he was well known to the enemy and would be a valuable prize. Even so he wanted to take part and borrowed the identity of a real Wing Commander Smith.

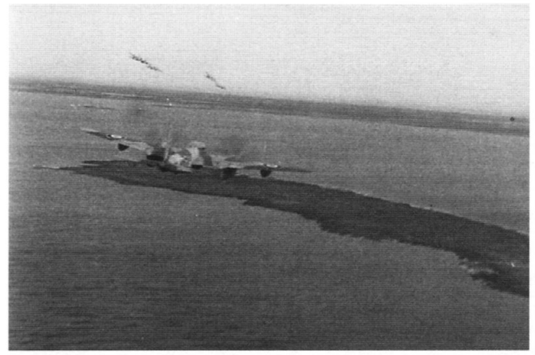
The crews were given a short briefing the following day (March 21) at the end of which the aircrews went to their aircraft and commenced take-off between 8.35 a.m. and 8.50 a.m.

From Fersfield the Mosquitos flew north-east towards Denmark at wave-top height with the Mustangs a little higher. There were strong gales over the North Sea that day and the air was very rough. They were also flying so low that sea spray dried on the windscreens, greatly reducing visibility and making it even more difficult to control the aircraft.

Sergeant Hearne films his pilot as the leading formation from No. 21 Squadron heads out low over the North Sea. All told,

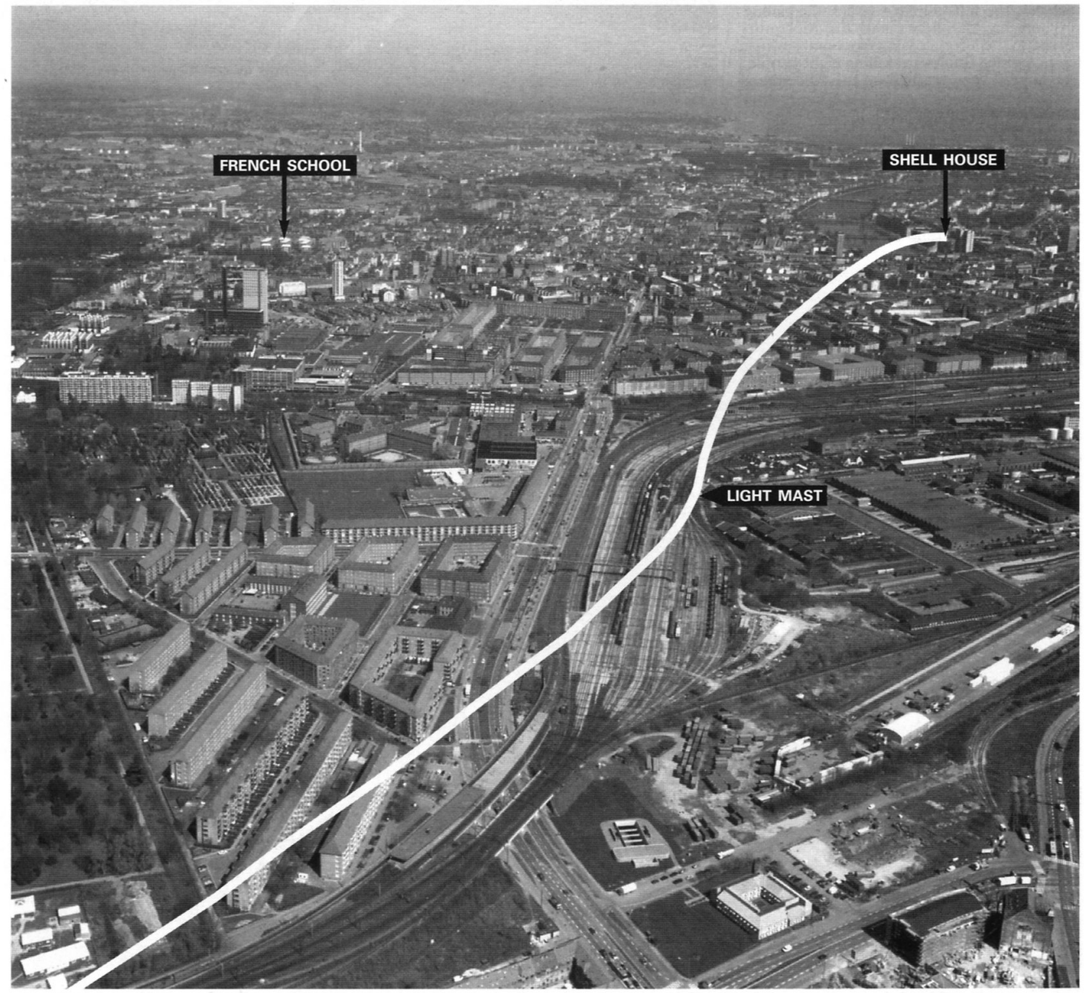


Hearne exposed 400 feet of film while Flying Officer Moore took 280 feet. We have included stills from both films. (IWM)



After making landfall on the west coast of Jutland, the route led almost due east across the Kattegat to Zealand. (IWM)

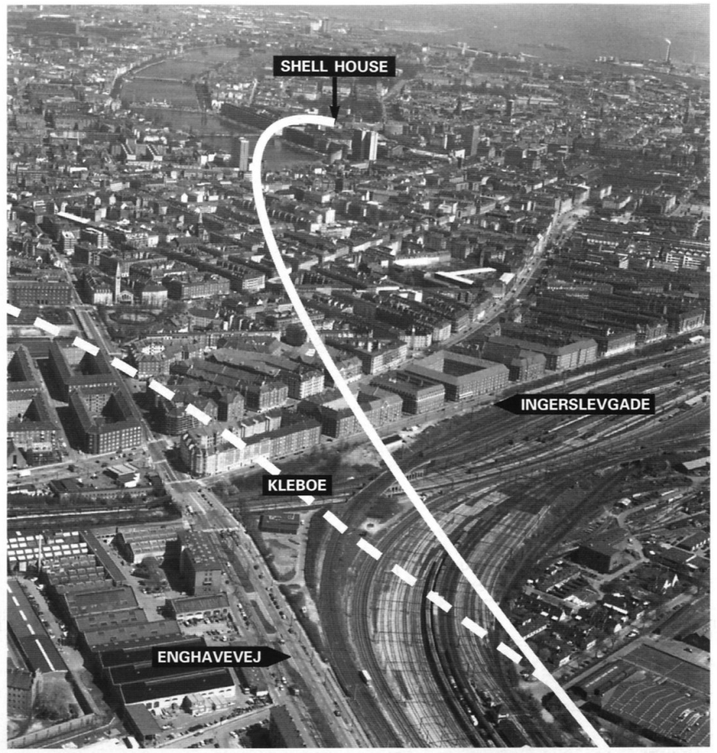
The formation made landfall south of Hvide Sande, Jutland, at 10.40 p.m. at which point the aircraft were detected by the German air raid warning system which reported RAF aircraft on an easterly course. German observer reports tracked the aircraft across Jutland, and Fluko (Flugwachkommando) alerted the air defence centre. The last report from Fluko was at 11.11 a.m.: 'Several machines over central Zealand, course south-east'. However, Fluko failed to advise Copenhagen until after the bombing commenced and the controllers concerned were later arraigned before a German court-martial.



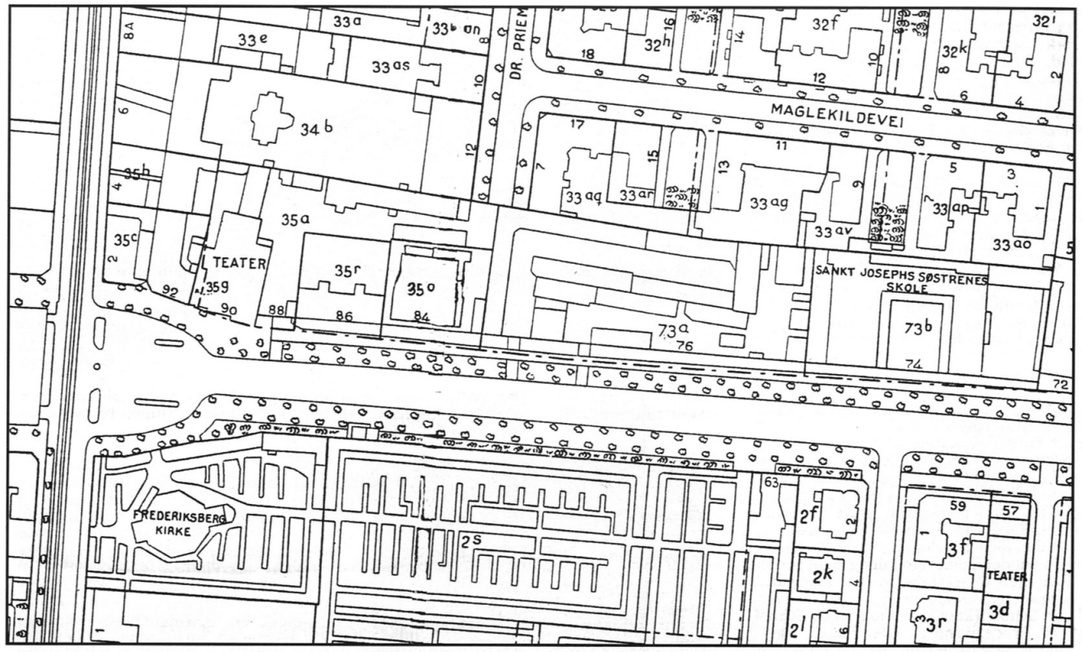
We commissioned our own 'Film Photo Unit' — Jens Ottesen of Foto-Magasinet — to refly the attack for us which he did on a glorious day in May 2001. Sadly though, this time roof-top height was out of the question! On this shot showing the flight path of the leading formation, we have added the significant features in the story.

Near the corner of Ingerslevgade and Enghavevej stood a 100-foot-high lattice-work mast carrying lighting for the rail yard. Travelling low and fast, with his forward vision no doubt impaired by salt-spray dried on his windscreen, Wing Commander Kleboe struck the top with his tailplane sending him off course to the north-west across Frederiksberg.

When the aircraft reached Lake Tissø the first wave of six Mosquitos from No. 21 Squadron, led by Bateson and Sismore in RS570, together with one of the FPU Mosquitos, headed for the target accompanied by 11 Mustangs from No. 126 Squadron. The second group was to hold off and attack after making one circuit of the lake and the last group after two circuits, thus separating the attacking waves by about one minute. When the first wave was some half a mile from the target the fourth Mosquito, SZ977, piloted by Wing Commander Peter Kleboe and navigated by Flying Officer Reginald Hall, struck a 30-metre-high light mast in a railway goods yard near the corner of Enghavevej and Ingerslevgade. Kleboe, his vision hampered by the dried-on spray, appeared to see the mast at the last moment. He pulled back the stick but the left tailplane struck the railing surrounding the lights and his Mosquito veered to the left, releasing two bombs which fell in Sønder Boulevard killing eight people. The aircraft then crashed on the Alleenberg garages, one building away from the Jeanne d'Arc School (known as the French School) at 74 Frederiksberg Allé, which was a Catholic school led by French nuns. The crew were killed instantly. The Mosquito caught fire and sent flames and smoke into the air just a few seconds flying time from the Shell House and directly on the line of attack to be taken by the follow-up waves.



The Mosquito crashed and exploded just off Frederiksberg Allé on the old Alléenberg amusement grounds. These had been closed in 1924 and a large garage (called the Alléenberg Garages) erected on the site. The fire and smoke so early in the attack confused the following aircraft — even like this FPU Mosquito — which led to the horrific disaster which followed. On the right stands the circular Frederiksberg Church, the road in the foreground being Pile Allé. (IWM)



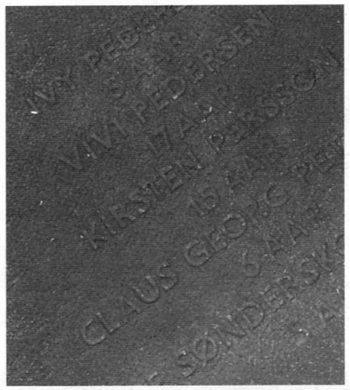
The 1937 survey plan will help to illustrate this part of Frederiksberg Allé as the present-day visitor will find that the house numbers have been altered with the rebuilding. No. 86 (now 100) is the tall apartment block to the left of the burning aircraft which appears to lie mainly on the site of No. 84 (98 today). The side road to the north of No. 84, Dr Priemes Vej, has now been extended south to join the main road, so separating No. 84 from the large garage site which occupied the long frontage of No. 76 (today 80-96). Then came Sankt Josephs Søstrenes School — the so-called French School — at No. 74. Although the crash is over 200 yards up the road, somehow the French School became the target for several of the following aircraft. Finally, on the opposite side of the road, is the Betty Nansen Theatre (at No. 57) where many of the injured — and the dead — were taken. (IWM) *Below:* **Jens Ottesen's oblique of the same area today.**

It is important to completely dispel the notion that Wing Commander Kleboe's aircraft crashed on the school as has previously been written in many accounts of the raid. The most detailed research on the Shell House raid has been carried out by aviation historian Kjeld Sasbye, and his book (in Danish) ***Operation Carthage*** **was published in 1994. Kjeld says that in fact the Mosquito cleared the roof of the school to crash 135 metres further up the road on the large, partially deserted garage complex, possibly trying to reach the large park at the end of Frederiksberg Allé. He says that Flying Officer Hall was probably flung out of the emergency hatch in the cockpit because his body fell through the roof of the Frederiksberg Theatre, located just beyond No. 86, landing at the feet of the female director who had just poured herself a cup of coffee.**

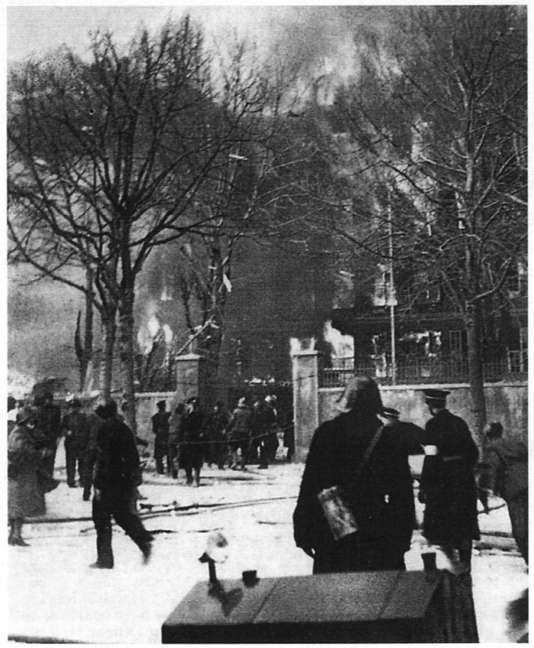
The strong westerly wind not only helped fan the flames but also drove the billowing smoke along the street to engulf the school. (MDR)

This wider view taken looking east shows the tall apartment block and the new ABC Theatre with its round tower which now stands on the corner of Dr Priemes Vej.

When Wing Commander Kleboe crashed near the school, the children, unwarned by an air raid alert, were all in their classrooms. In one, the pupils attention was drawn to the noise of the RAF planes sweeping low over the city, the Sister calling out: 'Look, they are British!'. The whole class crowded to the windows to watch. Suddenly one aircraft veered towards them and crashed in a fireball next to the school. The Sisters quickly ordered the children to the cellars but before all could take shelter, the first bombs began exploding. The north-west and eastern corners of the building collapsed killing many of the children and Sisters and trapping others on the upper floors. In the cellar shelter, after the first wave of bombing, some of the children escaped through the windows, only to fall victim to the second wave. Then the cellar began to flood from a broken water pipe. A fire broke out on the upper floors but the emergency command centre received the alarm very late due to the breakdown on the emergency communication system. The members of the rescue and ambulance services were part-timers and they did not reach the scene in much less than an hour. Meanwhile, the main fire department force was sent to the Shell House.

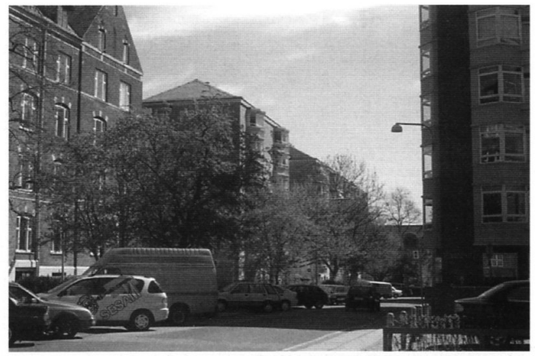


At the French School, passers-by and the Sisters, together with 15 firemen, struggled to rescue the trapped, fight the fire, and drive the ambulances. The water supply failed due to the ruptured mains and, aided by the strong wind, the school burned to the ground in less than two hours. Two firemen were killed when walls fell on them. When the fire was at last extinguished and the rescuers reached the cellar they found 42 children huddled together, having died from drowning or other injuries. Altogether, 86 children lost their lives and 67 were injured but 396 were saved. Ten St Joseph Sisters died and 35 were injured.



Despite desperate attempts to rescue the pupils from the school, 86 children and ten teachers lost their lives but 396 were saved.

This memorial now stands on the site of the entrance to the school, the flagstones surrounding it *(above centre)* **being inscribed with the names of those who died.**



The conflagration destroyed the whole block, these pictures being taken on the street behind the school — Maglekildevei. (MDR)

Maglekildevei behind the French school was a mass of flames against which the few firemen could make little impression. (MDR)

Two of the Mosquitos in the second wave dropped their bombs on the French school or just beside it. No. 11 Maglekildevei, which lies just behind the north-western corner of the school, burst into flames immediately and thus could well be the reason why the fire spread so quickly to engulf the school.

One bomb hit the west wing of the school and another struck the staircase by the east wing and chapel. Altogether, evidence of at least 11 bomb hits was found after the raid in the Frederiksberg Allé—Maglekildevei area resulting in the total destruction visible in this photo.

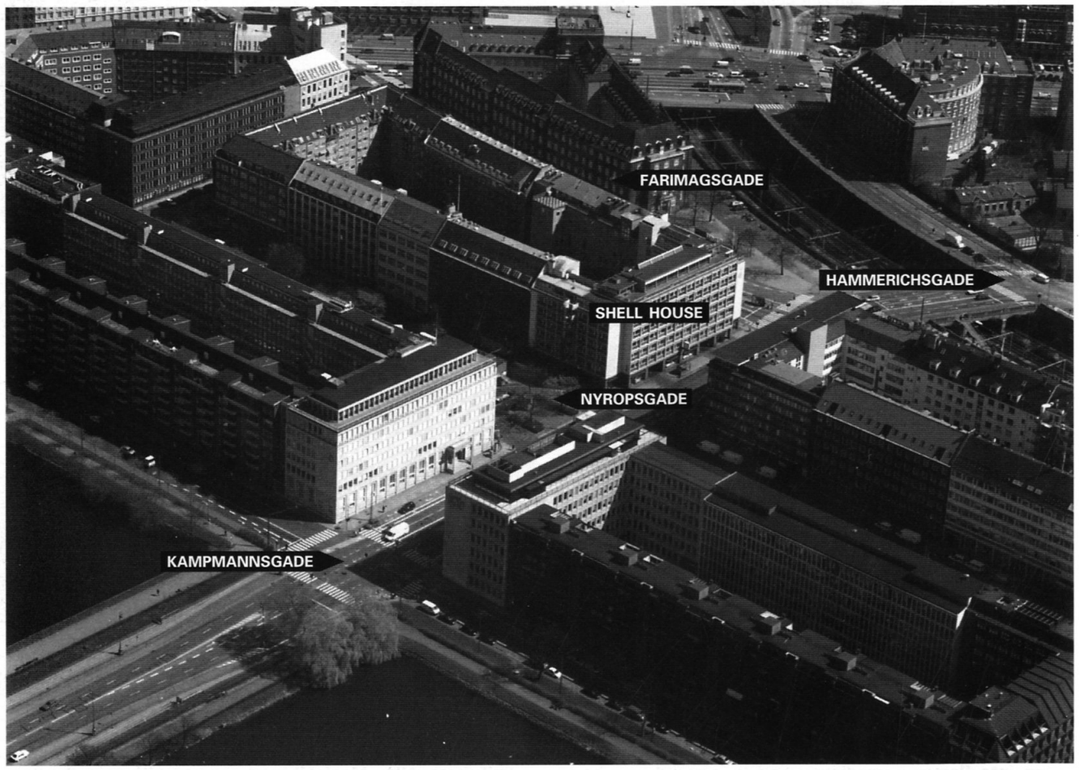
Left: **High drama as the camera plane narrowly misses the chimney of Copenhagen's Bryghus (brewery) on the west bank of the enclosed reservoirs used for the city's water supply, formed long ago by damning a small stream.** *Right:* **Here we see Saint Jørgen's Lake with the bridge leading to the Shell House on the extreme right. (IWM)**

The remaining Mosquitos in the first wave all dropped their bomb loads accurately on the Shell House at 11.14 a.m. A Danish witness said that when the first bombs struck, many Germans fled from the building, some even without their clothes, but were held up by the barbed wire surrounding it.

However, the second wave from No. 464 Squadron, accompanied by 12 Mustangs from No. 64 squadron and two from No. 126 Squadron, were distracted by the smoke from Kleboe's crash. As a result, the leader, Wing Commander Robert Iredale in SZ968 failed to release his bombs on the first pass and made another circuit, dropping his bombs on the north-east corner of the Shell House. Another two Mosquitos became separated from Iredale. One of them is believed to have dropped its bombs on the Shell House but the other bombed the smoke from Kleboe's wreckage. The fourth Mosquito failed to release its bombs and it is not known precisely where the following two Mosquitos dropped their bombs as both were shot down while returning to England.

The last to reach the target was the third wave of six Mosquitos with the other FPU Mosquito. All were attracted to the smoke billowing up from beside the French School but only one aircraft realised that it was not the intended target. Consequently, all the other aircraft released their bombs on or near the school.

The German air defences came alive after the first wave had attacked, the cruiser *Nürnberg*, which had moved from Aarhus harbour, and the harbour defences putting up an increasingly accurate and heavy fire. Mosquito NT123 flown by Flight Lieutenant David Pattison and Flight Sergeant Frank Pygram of No. 487 Squadron was hit by flak and radioed that they would try to reach Sweden. However the aircraft was so badly damaged that it came down near the island of Hven. Witnesses reported that the aircraft remained floating for some time with the two crewmen on a wing but because of the gale-force winds the islanders were unable to launch a rescue boat and both men were drowned when the aircraft sank. Their bodies were never recovered.

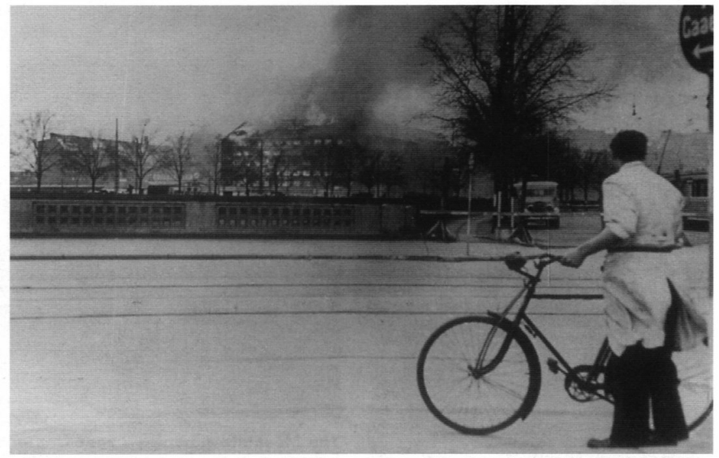


The Shell House — as its name implies the pre-war headquarters of the petroleum company — lies on the Kampmannsgade.

Of the Mustang escort, only 28 arrived over the target, three having aborted because of mechanical difficulties. The first wave of fighters attacked the flak positions on the roof of Dagmarhus building, 450 metres from the Shell House, setting them on fire, yet the guns were unmanned and were still covered with canvas. Other flak positions were on the target list but could not be identified. The first wave met almost no opposition except some inaccurate fire from the harbour but when No. 64 Squadron arrived, the anti-aircraft fire had increased and one Mustang piloted by Flight Lieutenant David Drew was hit and crashed in the Fælledpark in Østerbro killing the pilot. Another Mustang, piloted by Pilot Officer R. C. Hamilton of No. 64 Squadron, was hit but he was able to remain airborne as far as Ringkøbing, in western Jutland, where he was forced to make an emergency landing. Hamilton was later taken prisoner. None of the Mustangs from No. 234 Squadron were hit.

Two Mosquitos from the second wave were shot down after dropping their bombs, one by flak near Melby and the other north of Nykøbing Sjælland. One of the aircraft came down near Liseleje Beach while the other, flying about 15 meters above the sea on one engine, is believed to have crashed near the island of Samsø. Both crews, Flying Officers Ronald Dawson and Fergus Murray in SZ999 and Flying Officer John Palmer and Sub-Lieutenant Hermann Becker (of the Norwegian Air Force) in RS609, were killed.

The attack on the Shell House had lasted only four or five minutes and the aircraft returned to Fersfield on schedule, the last plane landing at 2.30 p.m. Four of the Mosquitos had been damaged by anti-aircraft fire and PZ402 piloted by Wing Commander F. H. Denton of No. 487 Squadron made a spectacular belly landing with all guns firing as the plane slewed from side to side down the runway. Another Mosquito returned on one engine but made a perfect landing.



Top: **The Shell House well and truly ablaze, as seen** *above* **from across Saint Jørgen's Lake and** *below left* **from Hammerichsgade. Both the pictures above are from the files of the Museum of Danish Resistance but look closely at the one below left from the collection at the Imperial War Museum in London. Will the person who introduced Toulouse-Lautrec and Michael Jackson to the story please step forward?!!**

The conflagration pictured from Farimagsgade — the street on the eastern side of the building. (MDR)

The Shell building was rebuilt soon after the war and was appearing on maps as soon as 1953.

Against expectations, not all the prisoners in the Shell House were killed. One of the hostages, Poul Borking, an SOE parachutist, was being interrogated on the fifth floor and was seated so that he could see out of a window. A Gestapo agent was telling Borking that as an SOE officer he could expect to be shot when at that precise moment he spotted the Mosquitos streaking towards the building. He leaped to his feet and turned over the table in front of him onto his interrogator and ran from the room past another stunned Gestapo man who was standing by the door. The first bombs exploded as Borking reached the third floor and when he reached the main door he found all the guards dead. Borking continued on to the main railway station where he boarded a train escaping from Copenhagen.

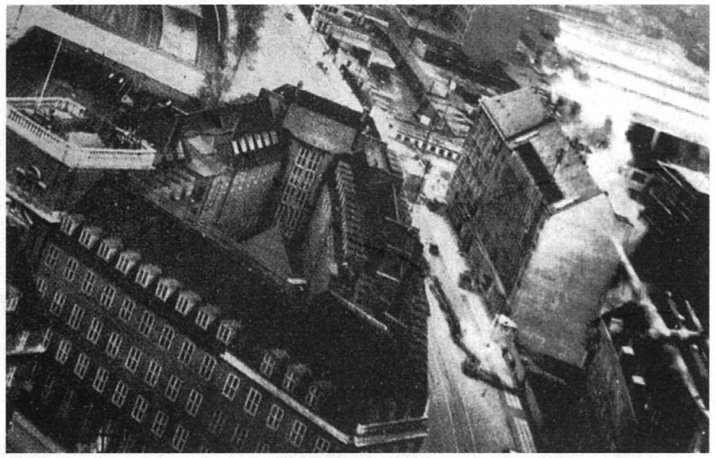
Another prisoner, C. Lyst Hansen, was reading in his bed when he heard the roar of engines followed by two violent explosions. With a solid wooden stool he was able to batter his cell door open and take the cell door keys from the terrified guard. He began opening the other cell doors, freeing all the prisoners from cells Nos. 6 to 22 although it was not possible to reach cells 1-5 because a bomb had blown a large hole at the corner of the corridor on Nyropsgade. All the released prisoners, including Mogens Fog and Aage Schoch, made their way down a rear stairway. When they reached the second floor they thought that they would have a better chance to escape if they used a main stairway. They moved to the front of the building only to find the stairway littered with dead and dying Germans as a bomb had exploded on a guard post just outside, killing everyone on the street, the blast catching those who were fleeing down the stairway inside. To reach the street the escaping prisoners were forced to step over and walk on the dead.

Two of the prisoners decided to remain behind because they feared reprisals against their families but the others scattered and all remained free until the liberation.

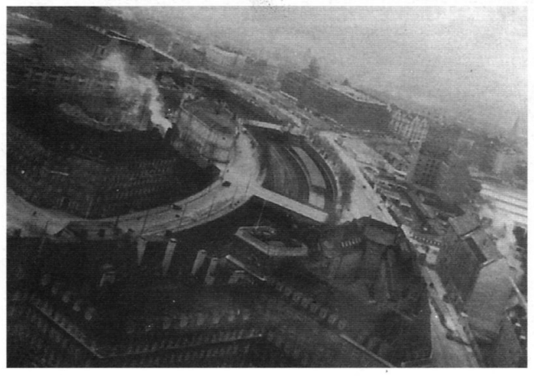
The five cells on the west Nyropsgade wing took direct bomb hits. Bombs passed through cells 2 and 3 killing the prisoners and penetrating to the lower floors of the south-west corner before exploding. The four prisoners in the remaining three cells found themselves lying in the rubble on the floor below their cells. They were not seriously injured but were trapped by fire on one side and a huge hole in the floor on the other. They made up a makeshift escape rope from belts and lowered themselves down to the fourth floor. Desperate to get away from the clutches of the Gestapo, and not having any other way to escape, they jumped one at a time to the pavement four floors below. All received serious injuries and were recaptured by the Germans. Two died within a few days, not having received any medical treatment except that from fellow prisoners; three were sent back to prison and another to a hospital. Five prisoners were killed when bombs hit the attic cells and another was killed on a lower floor where he was being interrogated.

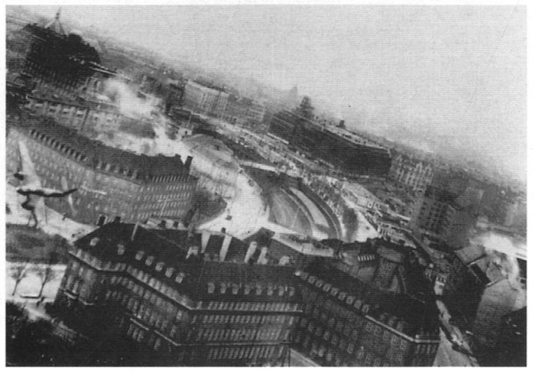
The Shell House was totally destroyed. Fires started by the incendiaries and fanned by the strong winds roared through the building, buckling the floors, collapsing the walls and totally destroying the contents. The fire department tried at first to save some neighbouring buildings, but withdrew when explosives stored inside them began detonating.

Casualties among the Gestapo were less than expected as all the leading Gestapo staff were attending the funeral of an officer who had shot himself two days previously. They escaped but an estimated 100 to 200 Germans and collaborators were killed. Although the Gestapo relocated soon in another building, the organisation in Copenhagen was broken and was unable to recover before Germany's final defeat.

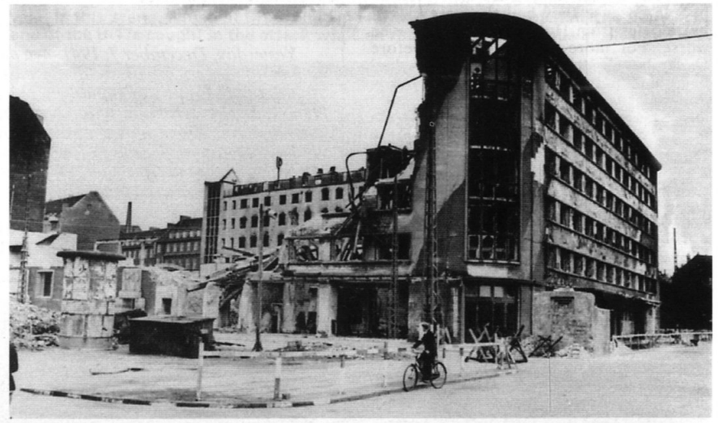


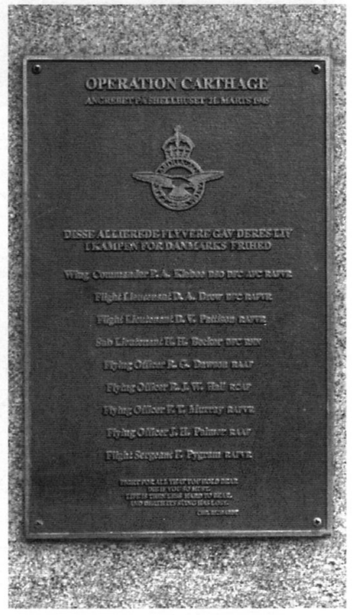
The Mosquito flown by Flight Lieutenant Mac Hetherington (YH-H) from No. 21 Squadron in the first wave was fitted with a still camera facing rearwards. These dramatic shots even show one of the attacking aircraft banking away northwards after releasing its two 500lb bombs on the Gestapo HQ which is burning on the extreme right. The wedge-shaped building in the foreground can easily be identified in the modern aerial on page 16. The railway line bends towards Vesterport station.



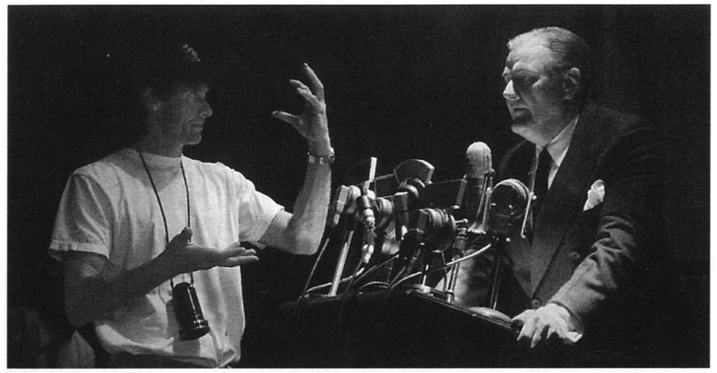


Operations Record Book, No. 464 Squadron: 'Six aircraft operated (one reserve). Aircraft left Fersfield at 08.40 and reached target Gestapo Headquarters at Copenhagen — at 11.00 hours. 464 Squadron were in the second box and flying conditions were not good. Considerable heavy and light flak was encountered in the harbour area and the target was attacked at max. 100ft. Unfortunately, W/Cdr Kleboe (who had just left us to take command of 21 Squadron) flew into a building about 1½ miles from the target and so caused difficulty for the following aircraft. However, the buildings were well and truly pranged. The whole operation was a classic example of precision bombing.' ORB No. 487 Squadron: 'Last wave of four aircraft bombed a building where fire and smoke were seen coming up. Believed now to be where aircraft 'T' (21 Squadron) crashed. Flight Lieutenant K. Greenwood, FPU, bombed target — bombs aimed at end of building.'





Today a plaque unveiled beside the entrance to the Shell House on the 50th anniversary of the raid records the names (in ranking order) of the airmen who failed to return. From No. 21 Squadron Wing Commander Peter Kleboe now buried in Bispebjerg Cemetery in Copenhagen (Plot X, Row 7, Grave 44) and his navigator, Flying Officer Reginald Hall, RCAF (Plot X, Row 6, Grave 45). From No. 64 Squadron, Mustang pilot Flight Lieutenant David Drew (Plot X, Row 6, Grave 128). From No. 464 Squadron Flying Officers Fergus Murray and Ronald Dawson, RAAF (missing and now commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, Panels 267 and 283); and Flying Officer John Palmer, RAAF (Runnymede Panel 283) and Sub-Lieutenant Hermann Becker of the Royal Norwegian Air Force now buried in Tranebjaerg Churchyard in Denmark (Plot K, Grave 3). From No. 487 Squadron Flight Lieutenant David Pattison and Flight Sergeant Frank Pygram (Runnymede Panels 265 and 272)

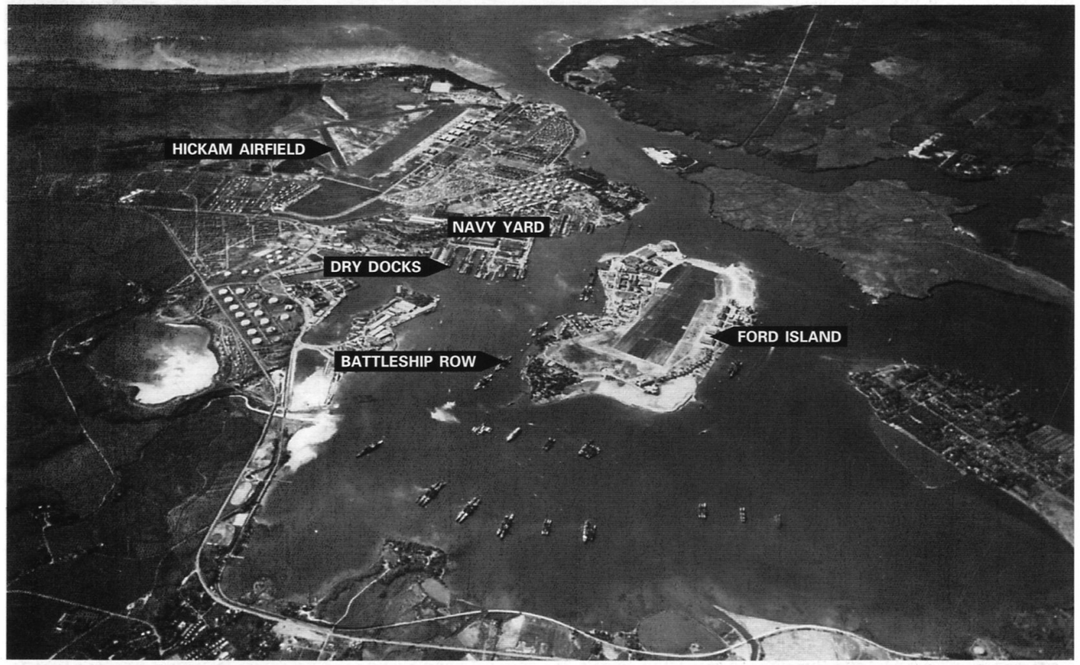


THE DATE OF INFAMY ON SCREEN

By Lawrence Suid

The Japanese attack on Pearl Harbor was traumatic enough in itself for the American people because they had their ass kicked but movies from Hollywood made it even worse. For more than two years before December 7, 1941, the film industry had been making 'preparedness' films showing how well the military was prepared to stop any invasion and keep the nation safe from attack. Pearl Harbor gave lie to both the film version and the military propaganda, which were obviously fashioned from the same trough. Although the attack was the greatest defeat the United States Navy ever suffered, it was to become the subject of one documentary and several feature movies. Now, Jerry Bruckheimer and Michael Bay have joined forces to make *Pearl Harbor*, the highest budgeted movie ever to go into production at $135,000,000.

> *Yesterday, December 7, 1941 — a date which will live in infamy — the United States of America was suddenly and deliberately attacked by naval and air forces of the Empire of Japan. . . . The attack yesterday on the Hawaiian Islands has caused severe damage to American naval and military forces. . . . Yesterday the Japanese Government also launched an attack against Malaya . . . Hong Kong . . . Guam . . . the Philippine Islands . . . Wake Island . . . and Midway Island. . . . Japan has therefore undertaken a surprise offensive extending throughout the Pacific area.*
>
> PRESIDENT FRANKLIN D. ROOSEVELT,
> ADDRESS TO THE US CONGRESS, DECEMBER 8, 1941



Ever since December 7, 1941 — a date that President Roosevelt *(top left)* declared would 'live in infamy' — the Japanese surprise attack on Pearl Harbor (seen *above* earlier in 1941) has been depicted on the screen in a number of films, not least by the latest offering from Jerry Bruckheimer. *Top right:* Director Michael Bay coaches Jon Voight, who plays President Roosevelt in *Pearl Harbor,* for his 'Date of Infamy' speech delivered to the US Congress on December 8.

In making the documentary *December 7 (*1942), the first movie to portray the devastation which the Japanese inflicted on the United States military in Pearl Harbor, John Ford used the limited footage taken during the attack and when scenes did not exist, he recreated them. He did such a good job that subsequent documentaries and feature films passed off the recreations as if the images were delivering the real thing.

Howard Hawks' *Air Force* (1943) became the first Hollywood feature film to show Pearl Harbor in any meaningful way. Using as a springboard the flight of 12 B-17s that were actually flying from San Francisco on the night of December 6/7, *Air Force* followed the *Mary Ann* to Hawaii, Wake Island, the Philippines, and finally to Australia where it crash-lands on a beach. The scenes in Pearl Harbor captured the essence of the 'date of infamy' as well as any movie has ever done, if not necessarily the reality.

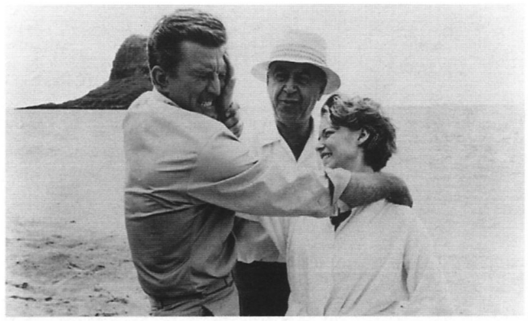
The aircraft set down on remote emergency airfields wherever they can. Unfortunately, Howard Hawks used models rather than actual planes in the landing sequences, which remains inexplicable since the Army had loaned the film-makers 12 bombers and several fighters during the production. Hawks shot the exterior flying sequences at an Army Air Corps base near Tampa to avoid scaring Californians with American fighters flying around decorated with Japanese markings.

While the film intended to show as realistically as possible how the Air Corps would fight the war in the air, it also provided propaganda images of the evil enemy. The *Mary Ann* is damaged in landing on Maui. While the crew feverishly works to make repairs, Japanese fifth columnists attack the aircraft which barely escapes and lands at Hickam Field. There, the crew learns that other Japanese drove trucks down the flight line destroying the planes. No such sabotage occurred, but the images served the war effort by creating hatred of the enemy.

From Here to Eternity (1953), the first post-war film to portray the attack, focused for the most part on the peacetime Army in Hawaii with December 7 occupying only the movie's last few minutes. Although the portrayal of the attack remains limited in scope, the movie perfectly captured the initial shock of the soldiers at the falling bombs and the immediate transition from a quiet Sunday morning to the violence of combat. To a significant degree, the Army's assistance to the production, particularly in the use of Schofield Barracks, created the ambiance of time and place. Beyond that, director Fred Zinnemann recreated the sense of violence and lost innocence without resorting to scenes of mass destruction of the fleet and aircraft or even the death of innocent civilians. Instead, the audience sees the sneak attack through the eyes of one small group of men whose lives suddenly change forever.

In the cinematic road to Pearl Harbor, John Ford's documentary *December 7* produced in 1942 was the precursor to Howard Hawks' *Air Force* released the following year. In this scene, filmed at Drew Field in Florida, the 'star' of the film, the *Mary Ann*, one of the B-17s caught in the attack while en route for Hawaii, lands at Hickam Field.

***From Here to Eternity* released in 1953 was the first post-war production to include the Pearl Harbor episode, albeit only at the very end of the film which is better known perhaps through the passionate embrace on the sand between Burt Lancaster and Deborah Kerr. So no excuses for including this shot *(above)* of the scene being set up for Fred Zinnemann's classic movie. *Below:* Private Jones (Tom Wood), Sergeant Karelson (Tim Ryan), Corporal Buckley (Jack Warden) and Sergeant Warden (Burt Lancaster) attempt to shoot down Japanese aircraft strafing Schofield Barracks.**



Left: **Another of Hollywood's legendary directors, Otto Preminger, is seen here discussing another beach scene, this time with Kirk Douglas and Jill Howath, Kirk's date for a picnic party which ends somewhat acrimoniously, for *In Harm's Way* released in 1965.** *Right:* **These paratroopers are identified in the film as 'para-Marines' although no US Marines ever parachuted into battle. They always landed from the sea, the 1st Battalion at Gavutu and Guadalcanal (August-September 1942), the 2nd Battalion on Choiseul (October 1943) and the whole 1st Marine Parachute Regiment on Bougainville (November 1943-January 1944).**

In contrast, Otto Preminger's *In Harm's Way* (1965) uses the attack on Pearl Harbor only as a springboard to a wartime melodrama and provides few insights into the raid or the reaction of its characters to the attack. For the most part, the film portrays the Navy in the early days of World War II, striking back at Japan. The production received full cooperation from the Pentagon in staging the attack and subsequent combat sequences. Why the military did so remains a mystery. The Defense Department is supposed to only provide assistance on films which will portray the military in a positive light or in the alternative, if assistance benefits the armed services by improving in some way a negative image in the original screenplay.

Tora! Tora! Tora! (see *After the Battle* No. 53), released in 1970, presented an objective, accurate account of the attack from both sides even if Admiral Isoroku Yamamoto never said that the attack on Pearl Harbor would only 'awake a sleeping giant and fill him with a terrible resolve'. However, in doing so, the film-makers forgot the cardinal rule that Hollywood movies must entertain if they are to earn money, the primary and secondary goal of every feature motion picture. Consequently, despite the value of *Tora! Tora! Tora!* as history, its characters remained two-dimensional cardboard figures and the film failed to attract audiences.

Cinemagoers had to wait until 1970 for Twentieth Century Fox's chief Darryl F. Zanuck to bring *Tora! Tora! Tora!* to the screen in the same pseudo-documentary style with which he had achieved such a success eight years previously with *The Longest Day*. Using separate American and Japanese production crews, each with their own director striving for authenticity, the action was believable, the storyline told from both sides accurate, and with many of the locations authentic.

What else could a feature film say about the event that changed the United States forever? Director Michael Bay attempted to answer that question before he began location shooting in April 2000. He predicted: 'You will see what happened at Pearl Harbor like you have never seen it in any other movie. Our goal is to stage the event with utmost realism.' He said that he wanted *Pearl Harbor* to become a movie 'by which all other films are measured'. He dismissed *Tora! Tora! Tora!* as being 'more of a documentary' and producer Jerry Bruckheimer agreed, saying that *Tora! Tora! Tora!* had become simply a docu-drama with no three-dimensional characters.

The project began with discussions which Bay had with writer Randall Wallace and Joe Roth, then head of production at Disney Studio, seeking a suitable subject for the director's next project following his successes with *Armageddon* and *The Rock*. Ultimately, one of Bay's friends asked if he had considered doing a movie about Pearl Harbor. After hearing that Bruckheimer, who had produced Bay's last two films, was also interested in doing a story about the events surrounding December 7, Bay made a research trip to Hawaii. There, he said he 'was really surprised how period the stuff was'. He also found that the military bases were 'some of the prettiest he had ever seen'. At that point, he said, 'Okay, it's starting to really seem interesting. How can I create this war?' An answer came when he discovered the inactive fleet which he could use as props: 'I'm a director who likes to use real stuff to blow up, stuff to inter-cut with digital effects'.

Bay then met with Bruckheimer and Wallace to brainstorm ideas for a story set within the framework of Pearl Harbor. Subsequently, the director and writer talked with 80 Pearl Harbor survivors, after which Bay said that 'the movie started to come together'. Ultimately, Wallace produced a script which attempted to solve the problem of having interesting characters by creating a love triangle in which two lifelong friends fall in love with the same nurse. Bay explained that without the love story in *Titanic*, the movie would have only been about the sinking of a ship and without his two-guys-and-a-girl story, *Pearl Harbor* would have become a documentary about December 7.

In the script, one of two fighter pilot friends, Ben Affleck, as Rafe, goes off to England to join one of the RAF 'Eagle' squadrons. During aerial combat with German bombers over the English Channel, Affleck gets shot down and is presumed dead. His friend, Josh Hartnett, as Danny, and Kate Beckinsale, as Evelyn, the nurse, first comfort each other and then fall passionately in love. On the evening of December 6, as Evelyn is completing her work at the hospital, Rafe returns from the dead, expecting to take up the relationship. He does not understand Evelyn's hesitation to embrace him until Danny comes to join them. A night of drinking and recriminations between the two friends ends with the attack during which both fliers manage to take off and shoot down seven of the raiders.

As written, the script graphically portrays the attack, the sinking of the battleships and the death and destruction that occurred. Despite the title and the destruction, the film-makers chose not to end with downbeat images or even President Roosevelt's clarion call to avenge the date of infamy. Instead, Colonel Jimmy Doolittle summons the friends to Florida to take part in the raid on Japan in April 1942. Before they depart, Evelyn tells Rafe she is pregnant with Danny's baby. At the end, Danny dies after telling Rafe he will become the father of the baby.

Before filming began for *Pearl Harbor*, a pre-production ceremony was held in the memorial above the sunken *Arizona*. 'The head of the Pacific Fleet gave a little speech', writes Jerry Bruckheimer, 'and Michael Bay and I gave a speech and then they played "Taps". Eleven hundred men are entombed underwater. A lot of their shipmates want to be buried with their friends so they also get encased in the *Arizona*. Apparently it happened a few weeks before we got there when a few more men were put with their shipmates.' L-R: Governor Benjamin E. Cayetano, Admiral Thomas B. Fargo (Commander-in-Chief, US Pacific Fleet), Jerry Bruckheimer, Kate Beckinsale, Cuba Gooding, Jr., Josh Hartnett, Michael Bay, Ralph Lindenmeyer, a member of the San Diego Chapter Pearl Harbor Survivors Association, and Ben Affleck.

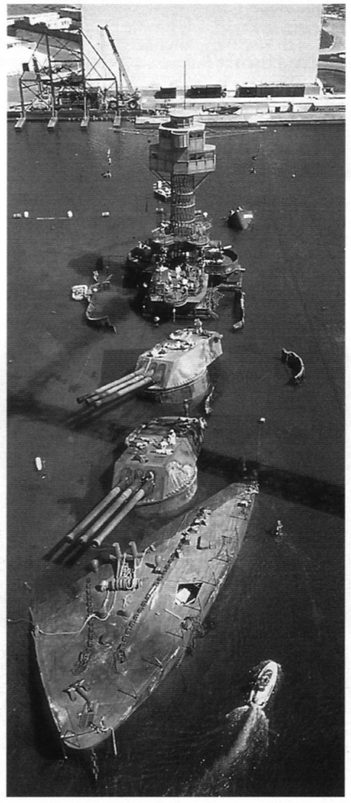
Survivors of the 1941 attack visited the film set at Rosarita Beach at Baja in Mexico, the facility which had been specially established by Twentieth Century Fox for making *Titanic*. Its advantage is that it has an unobstructed view out to sea. The replicas of the sunken *Arizona*, left, and the upturned *Oklahoma* can be seen in the background.

To replicate the *Oklahoma* rolling over, the bow section was mounted on a huge gimbal mechanism which enabled it to turn turtle and then return to its upright position for another take. The camera platform can be seen suspended above the deck.

On behalf of Bruckheimer, Bay, and Disney Pictures, executive producer Jim Van Wyck submitted the initial script, titled *Tennessee*, to Phil Strub, the Special Assistant for Audio Visual, in the Defense Department's public affairs office on October 7, 1999. In his preliminary request for assistance, the producer said the company was looking at filming locations in Hawaii and asked for permission 'to try to recreate "Battleship Row", using ships from the Reserve Fleet at Pearl Harbor. We would like your assistance in moving and anchoring approximately eight ships — first to an area where we could construct set pieces on board and do refurbishment and then to specific placement in "Battleship Row" for filming.' The company also wanted to film on board the USS *Missouri*, only recently arrived in Pearl Harbor to become a museum (see *After the Battle* No. 107, page 20).

Disney Pictures, which was bankrolling the film, submitted the final draft of the script, now retitled *Pearl Harbor*, to Strub and the services on December 22, 1999. On January 10, Strub advised Bruckheimer that while the Pentagon had 'concerns regarding some of the military depictions, we don't believe that any will be impossible to resolve'. Jack Green, a Navy historian whom the Defense Department assigned as historical advisor to the production, later explained that the Pentagon had to deal with two conflicting concerns. On one hand, the military saw *Pearl Harbor* appealing to young people and so serving as a recruiting tool. As a result, it wanted to help make the film as entertaining and dramatic as possible. On the other hand, the controversies surrounding the *Enola Gay* exhibit at the Smithsonian Institution in 1995 (see *After the Battle* No. 92, page 47) had sensitised veterans groups, who felt empowered to have their legacy presented accurately. Consequently, Green and Lieutenant Melissa Schuermann, the Navy's liaison to the production, worked long hours to reconcile the differences between the film-makers' desire for drama and veterans who insisted upon accurate portrayals of what they had experienced at Pearl Harbor and during the Doolittle raid on Japan.

Green and Schuermann had no problem with the two fighter pilots friends taking part in the Doolittle raid even though reality remains quite different. Doolittle recruited his crews from the only B-25 group in existence at the beginning of the war. The all-volunteer crews had all trained together, each member knew the bomber inside and out, and Doolittle never invited any fighter pilot to join the mission. Nor did the military advisors object strenuously to having broomsticks, masquerading as tail guns, installed moments before the take-off from the *Hornet* as described in the script. In fact the broomsticks had actually been put into the bombers during training at Eglin Field before they flew to the West Coast. However, Green and Schuermann did not consider this a major inaccuracy, recognising the drama the scene would create on the screen.

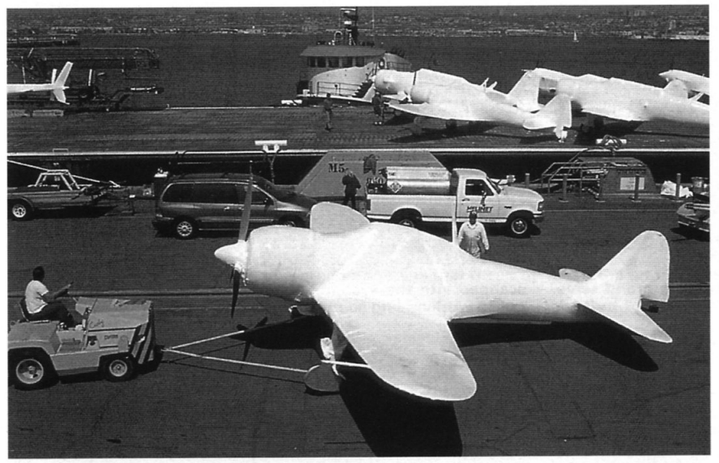


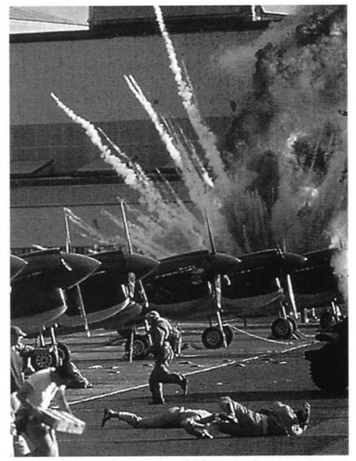
The *West Virginia* had a latticework mast which differed from the *Arizona*'s tubular superstructure.

For their part, the raiders and retired Air Force Colonel C. V. Glines, the biographer of Doolittle and historian of the Tokyo mission, expressed their primary concern of how *Pearl Harbor* would ultimately portray Doolittle. Bay's office had called Glines in early 2000 asking if he would talk with the screenwriter to check out the accuracy of the account of the raid. Wallace never called. When Glines finally read a script in May, he advised Schuermann: 'The errors are extremely gross and the script is an injustice to the very brave men who flew the mission. The scriptwriter obviously did no research for this portion of the script.' The initial draft represented Doolittle as profane and ignorant of something so obvious as a slide rule being used to calculate fuel consumption. Whereas Doolittle had a Doctor of Science degree in aeronautical engineering. After finally meeting with the director during filming aboard the *Lexington* in July, Glines offered the film-makers suggestions to correct the distortions of fact and characterisation.

For his part, Bay said, 'there are people who will come out and say this is not right, that is not right, this isn't right. But, if you were to do the accurate movie of Pearl Harbor, it would take nine hours'. He acknowledged that the script did include some composite characters including Dan Aykroyd, the cryptologist, who was actually playing seven different people 'to help the audience understand'. He also understood that people might have problems with some of the dramatic licence in the film such as placing the battleships 50 yards apart instead of being tied up together, but explained that 'what I tried to go after were the essences of what happened at Pearl Harbor. And, I think we got that right.'

To make sure that the film-makers got it right enough to obtain cooperation, Bruce Hendricks, the new head of production at Disney, Bruckheimer, and Bay visited Secretary of Defense William Cohen on January 20, 2000, to discuss the project. The following month, Phil Strub of Public Affairs advised Bruckheimer that the Pentagon had approved military assistance, starting the process by which each of the services provided aid to the production during filming in Hawaii, aboard the aircraft carrier *Constellation*, and at mainland locations including the USS *Lexington* now a museum tied up in Corpus Christie, Texas. There, Bay filmed four B-25s taking off from the immobilised ship and used the vessel to portray action aboard Japanese carriers that took part in the attack on Pearl Harbor.





Left: **Sixteen vintage aircraft from various sources were shrunk-wrapped and delivered to San Diego from where they were shipped as deck cargo to Hawaii for the filming of the main aerial attack.** *Right:* **Fifteen replica P-40s were constructed for use as targets for the strafing sequences at Wheeler and Bellows airfields.**

The agreement to cooperate did not end negotiations between the military and the film-makers to correct historical inaccuracies in the script. Jack Green, the Pentagon's designated historical advisor, later observed that efforts to obtain changes created 'a massive amount of work'. In addition to the portrayals of Doolittle and Pacific Fleet commander Admiral Husband Kimmel, the Pentagon was to challenge the suggestion that Japanese-Americans spied on Pearl Harbor. It also pointed out the inaccuracy of having Rafe flying for the Eagle squadron in his American uniform.

Wallace had also placed Admiral Yamamoto aboard the Japanese task force although he had not accompanied the armada and had the planner of the Pearl Harbor attack uttering the now infamous words that the attack would only 'awake a sleeping giant'. Of course, the comment had not come from the admiral's mouth but from the writer of *Tora! Tora! Tora!* Moreover, Wallace had ended his screenplay with a voice-over narrative inaccurately stating that five of Doolittle's fliers had died on the raid whereas in fact seven of the airmen died. The Japanese had executed three and allowed one to die in prison, a reality the writer apparently felt should better be left unstated.

However, in fairness to the film-makers, they always listened to and sometimes accepted the suggestions from Jack Green, Lieutenant Schuermann, the Doolittle family, and Colonel Glines. In response to Green's explanation that the Eagle squadrons were comprised of Americans who had volunteered to fly in the RAF, Bay has Rafe tell Josh Hartnett's Danny he had been ordered to England. However, he then explains to Kate Beckinsale's Evelyn that he had volunteered and had made up the story so that Danny would not have tried to come along. On the other hand, Rafe appears in Britain in American uniform whereas all Eagle volunteers arrived from the States in civilian clothes before being kitted out in RAF uniform (at Moss Bros in London).

Does it matter, for example, that not one character smokes in the film when even President Roosevelt often appeared with a cigarette in his mouth? What about the lack of native Hawaiians in the movie? At the same time, the film never mentions that most of the civilian deaths and injuries came from friendly fire spent rounds from the anti-aircraft guns that crews were able to man.

Does it matter that the film would like the audience to believe that the Army Air Corps in peacetime would accept Rafe into the service even though he has dyslexia and cannot read an eye chart. Yet, after going to England, he manages to write beautiful, poetic letters to Evelyn. At the same time, the nurses, including one 19-year-old girl, supposedly highly educated professionals, behave like contemporary women looking for a good time rather than conveying the morality of the time in which they were living. Nor do they often wear their uniforms although they were in the military.

The fictional characters aside, Pearl Harbor shows little concern for either geographical or military reality or a valid historical time line. On Long Island, where the audience first meets the pre-war fliers, a tall hill provides the background to Mitchel Field (spelled with two 'l's on the hangar in the movie). Incongruently, the same tall protrusion appears behind Eglin Field in Florida where Doolittle trained his crews. When Rafe returns from the dead after being shot down by a German fighter during the Battle of Britain, he mentions being rescued by a French fisherman from the sea although the warring air forces met over the English Channel, close to the white cliffs of Dover which do appear as the setting for the aerial combat. The film-makers would also like people to believe that Danny could obtain permission to fly his P-40 fighter over Pearl Harbor at night and smuggle Evelyn aboard for a joy ride.

Perhaps most to the point, little in the film provides an accurate or even plausible account of the events leading up to Pearl Harbor or the attack itself. Does anyone really care? Too many people in the United States today, as was probably the case on the mainland in December 1941, probably have no idea of Pearl Harbor's location or importance. After seeing the film, at least most viewers will know where the Japanese attacked and will have at least some idea of the destruction that took place there. However, they will know precious little of why Japan undertook the enterprise, how its Navy successfully carried out the sneak attack, or even the impact which Doolittle's raid had on the home front and military effort.

The Duke of Beaufort's private airfield at Badminton near Chipping Sodbury was used for the American Eagle squadron sequence where his stately home provided a British-looking backdrop although, in reality, the Eagle squadrons were never stationed at makeshift aerodromes and certainly not in Gloucestershire! The code 'XR' is correct for No. 71 'Eagle' Squadron but 'RF', displayed prominently in the aerial sequences, belonged to No. 303 — a Polish squadron!

Computer technology now permits trickery on a grand scale. *Above left:* A colour aerial photograph of Pearl Harbor today is scanned into the system. *Above right:* The ILM company then got to work adding computer-generated battleships and aircraft.

More CG aircraft, tracer fire and smoke are included to make this shot into what is claimed to be the most complicated visual effect scene ever created for a motion picture.

Film-makers have long acknowledged that they create dramatic movies to entertain, not historical documentaries to educate. They ignore the reality that historical accuracy and good drama can be compatible. To be fair, neither Bay nor Bruckheimer ever claimed they were making a documentary or even a docu-drama. Instead, they said they were telling a fictional story using Pearl Harbor as a stage on which to set a love triangle. If the film had borne the original title of *Tennessee,* a code-name used to hide the subject of the project in its early days of development, then their representations might have carried more weight. However, the very name of the film implies that audiences would be witnessing an historical event, accurately rendered. Ultimately, then, viewers must ask whether Pearl Harbor exceeds the limits of dramatic licence.

The film's raison d'être, the 40-minute cinematic Japanese attack, never rises above the level of a computer-graphics video game, despite Michael Bay's description of himself as 'a director who likes to use real stuff to blow up'. In essence, it remains a series of set-piece generic explosions, aircraft flying in all directions, and men being strafed on land, in the water, and in the air. Bay blows up the *Arizona* almost immediately with a bomb the audience follows down, through the decks, where its mechanism continues to whir for a few seconds before exploding. In actual fact, the battleship did not receive its mortal wound until almost 20 minutes after the Japanese attack began. The bomb's absurd cinematic journey into the ship does provide a unique perspective, but historians have never established for sure exactly how the *Arizona* suffered its mortal blow. In any case, ignoring history, Bay continues his recreation of the destruction at Pearl Harbor and surrounding facilities without a break, although, the Japanese actually sent two separate waves of aircraft to Oahu.

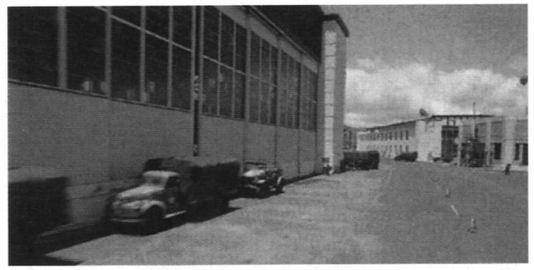
To heighten the drama of the attack, the director separated the battleships in December 1941 which had been tied rail to rail by 50 yards, so that the attacking Japanese aircraft could fly between the two rows although this produced a problem in the portrayal of Dorie Miller, the first black man to receive the Navy Cross. Some critics of the original script pointed out that no record existed to show that Miller shot down *any* Japanese machines during the actual attack as written. In the cinematic recreation, Miller fires repeatedly at the attacking aircraft as they swoop down to deck level between the two rows of battleships. At times his machine guns clearly point directly at the battleships 50 yards away and whether Miller hit any aircraft, he would surely have hit his own ships!

Far more serious, to heighten the drama of the attack, Bay acknowledged he has manipulated history by moving Admiral Kimmel's receipt of a telegram from Admiral Harold Stark, the Chief of Naval Operations, from November 27 to December 7, and combined it with the 'one o'clock telegram' which arrived by Western Union after the attack had ended. The 'cinematic' message begins: 'This despatch is to be considered a war warning'. If the director had presented history accurately, audiences might well conclude that Kimmel had failed to take proper precautions against a surprise attack. However, by showing the admiral receiving the telegram *after* the attack, Bay has effectively switched the blame to Stark and the government in Washington, including the President. Bay also admitted he had delayed Kimmel's receipt of a message warning that the Japanese embassy had been told to burn its secret papers and destroy its decoding machines several days prior to the morning of December 7 with the comment: 'That's not historically accurate, but it's more drama.'

Historical accuracy disappears further once Bay embarks upon his account of Doolittle's raid. Bay makes the tenuous connection between Pearl Harbor and the mission by having President Roosevelt demand that his military leaders find a way to strike back at Japan for the attack. Despite Jack Green's efforts to correct the portrayal, Bay has the unnamed, but recognisable military leaders General George Marshall, Admiral Harold Stark and General Henry Arnold come across as defeatist and unable to act when the President demands they come up with a plan. No such meeting ever took place and in perhaps the most false scene in the entire movie, Jon Voight, as the President, tells the assembled officers that God put him in his wheelchair for a good reason and then stands up unaided apparently to symbolise the will to win the nation must exhibit.

The film does introduce by his real name, Captain Francis Low, the Navy officer who conceived in early January the idea of flying Army bombers off an aircraft carrier to attack Japan. That remains virtually the last accurate incident in the movie. Immediately, Bay returns to Hawaii for a scene of flag-draped coffins of the Pearl Harbor dead stretching across a hangar floor and onto the outside tarmac. Jack Green explained that the director wanted to replicate scenes he had watched on television of American dead arriving at Dover, Delaware. Even though the film does not provide the actual date that the officer came up with the idea for the raid, most viewers would understand that a considerable amount of time had clearly passed since December 7. In fact, the military had buried its dead within a day or two, not weeks of the attack. Apart from the reality that Hawaii has a tropical climate, the services had no time for ceremony following the attack.

Mess Attendant Second Class Dorie Miller (played by Cuba Gooding, Jr) shoots down a computer-generated Zero attacking the *West Virginia*.



The problem with computer-generated imagery is that it can be taken too far like this ridiculous *Star Wars*-type shot.

Once aboard the cinematic *Hornet* on its way to Japan, Bay subverts the truth when he has Doolittle tell one of the fliers that no bomber has ever taken off from an aircraft carrier, clearly intending to heighten the drama for audiences when the cinematic launch takes place. In reality, as soon as the planning for the raid began, Army Air Corps pilots had flown two B-25s off the *Hornet* cruising off Norfolk, Virginia, to ascertain if it could be done.

During the cinematic attack, some of the factories appear to explode before the planes arrive over their targets and Danny's plane receives significant damage from anti-aircraft fire, which kills one of his crew. In reality, the attack itself caught Japan by surprise and Japanese gunners and aircraft inflicted virtually no damage on any of the bombers.

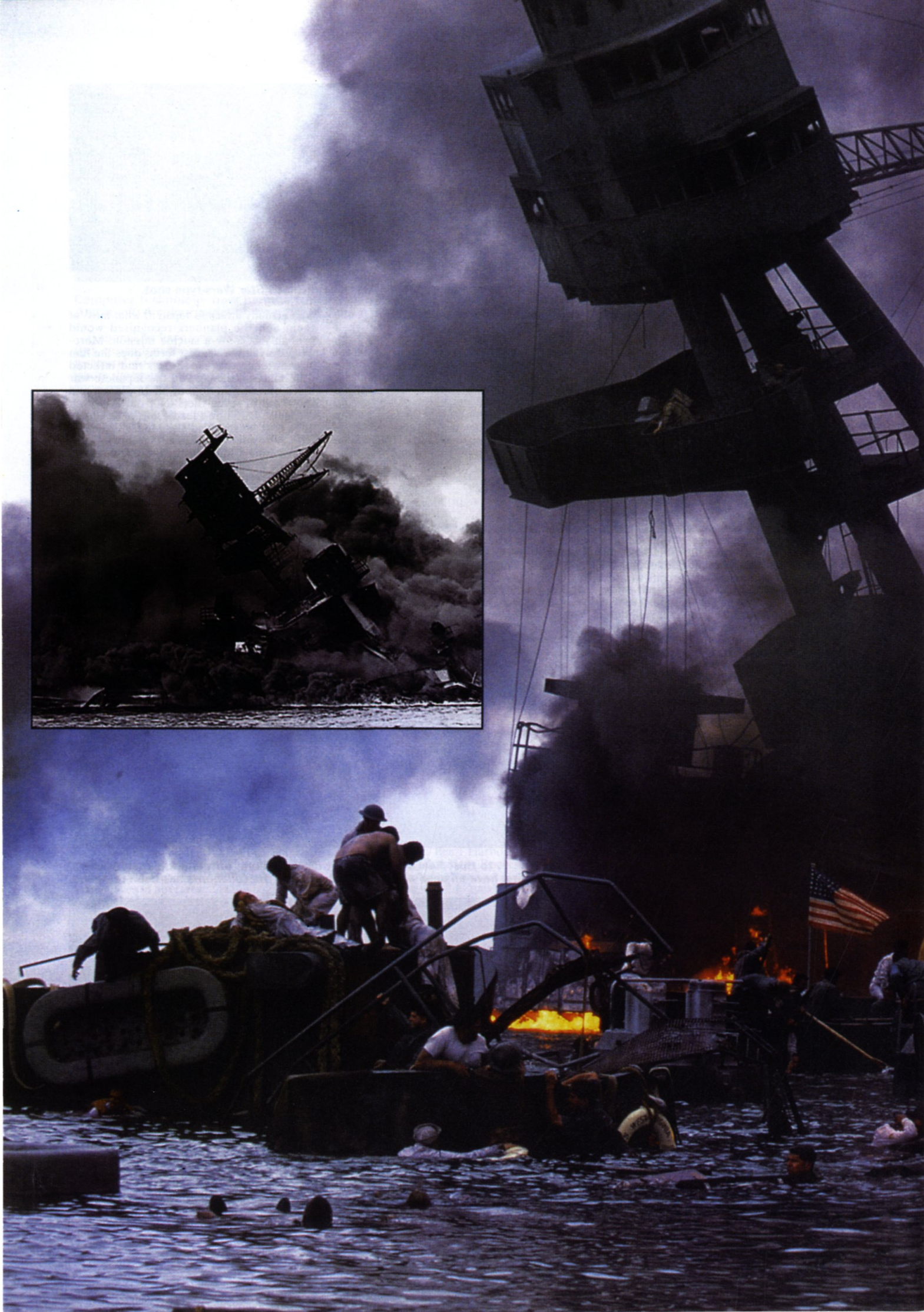
Finally, after reaching the Chinese mainland and immediately running out of fuel, the two heroes crash-land their aircraft within a couple of hundred feet of each other. Although the bombers have no fuel left, they burst into flame. The crews come under immediate attack from Japanese soldiers and following an incomprehensible fire-fight and hand-to-hand combat, Danny dies from his injuries in the crash, from being stabbed by a Japanese soldier, being tied to an ox-yoke and finally being shot.

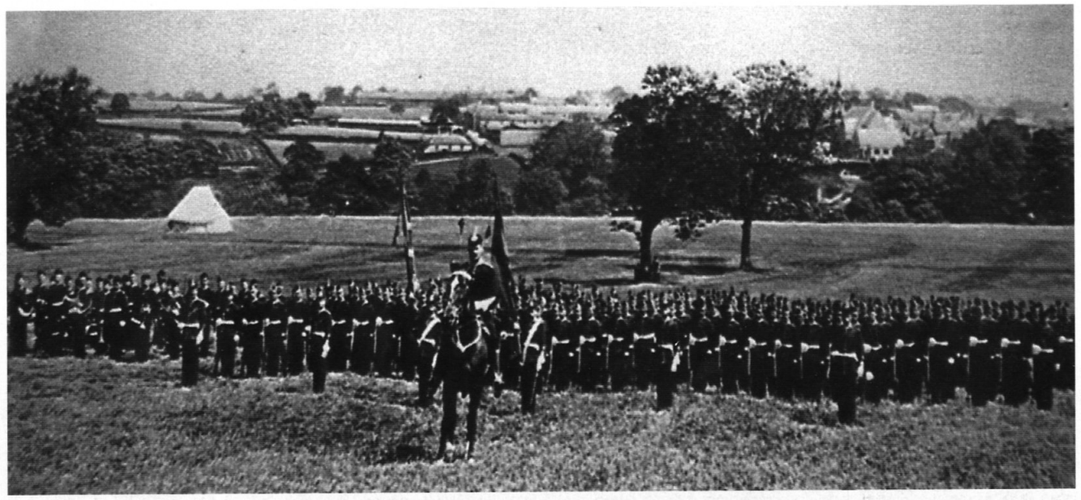
The Japanese did capture eight of the raiders, but not immediately and without any of the histrionics which Bay creates. The film omits any mention of the real drama of how Doolittle and most of his men returned to the United States. Instead, after Chinese soldiers rescue Rafe and surviving crew members of the two crashed aircraft, Bay dissolves to a scene of some of the fliers returning bearing Danny's coffin. In fact, the ashes of the seven dead fliers only returned to America after the war.

Perhaps the most egregious inaccuracy in the entire film occurs when Evelyn intimidates an officer into admitting her to a secure communications centre monitoring the course of the raid as the bombers attack their targets. In reality, she could not have known of the secret raid since none of the fliers knew where they were going until the *Hornet* put to sea from Alameda Air Station near Oakland, California. Moreover, even if she somehow learned of the plans and could have talked her way into the facility, she could not have listened to any dialogue once inside. Doolittle had had the long-range radios removed from the bombers to save weight and the crews would have maintained radio silence during the flight to Japan. And even if any of the aircraft had kept its radio, the technology of the time was incapable of transmitting dialogue from near Japan to Hawaii. Even worse, Doolittle is not seen to break radio silence in the film until after the attack — yet Evelyn is shown listening to it while it is taking place!

Ultimately then, the film's Doolittle sequence contains virtually no accuracy and worse, fails to convey the courage of the men who actually attacked Japan in what most of them and the planners recognised would probably become a suicide mission. Moreover, only in the vaguest terms does the film acknowledge that Doolittle's raid inflicted little material damage on the Japanese war machine, with the loss of all 16 planes, and the death of seven fliers. Nor did Bay even recognise Doolittle's leadership or acknowledge that he received the Medal of Honor from President Roosevelt following his return from China. Instead, the film closes with the President pinning the Distinguished Flying Cross on Rafe, something no President would ever have done as the pilot would have received it at a much lower echelon. A rewritten voice-over then offers a few words intended to explain the importance of the raid while omitting any mention of the seven fliers who died during or after the attack. After all, Hollywood makes movies only to make money and financial expediency dictated that the truth might result in a smaller box-office return in Japan!

From this . . . to this! Real stunt men but digital sailors, turrets and superstructure, ships on fire, have all been added while the hull of the *Oklahoma* has been removed.





DEERBOLT CAMP

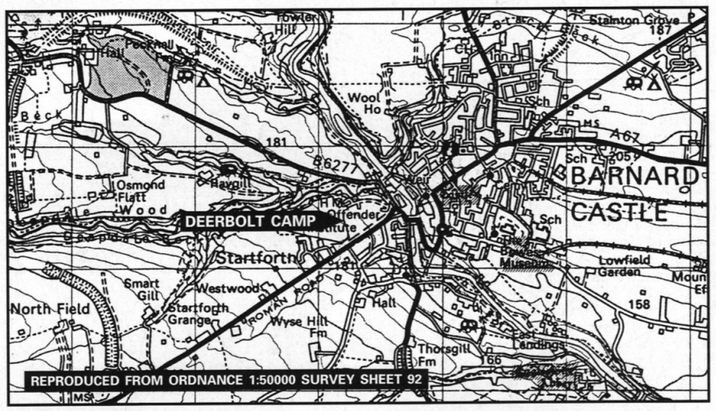
By Frank T. Smith

The area known as Deerbolt lies to the west of the south Durham town of Barnard Castle, the site of the camp being bounded to the south by the A67; to the north by the wooded valley known as Deepdale and to the east by the River Tees. This once-strategic western approach to the town is dominated by the great round tower of the castle itself, the view from the battlements overlooking the landscaped area once known as Deerbolt Park. It is within this area, now owned and occupied by the Prison Service, that Deerbolt Camp was born.

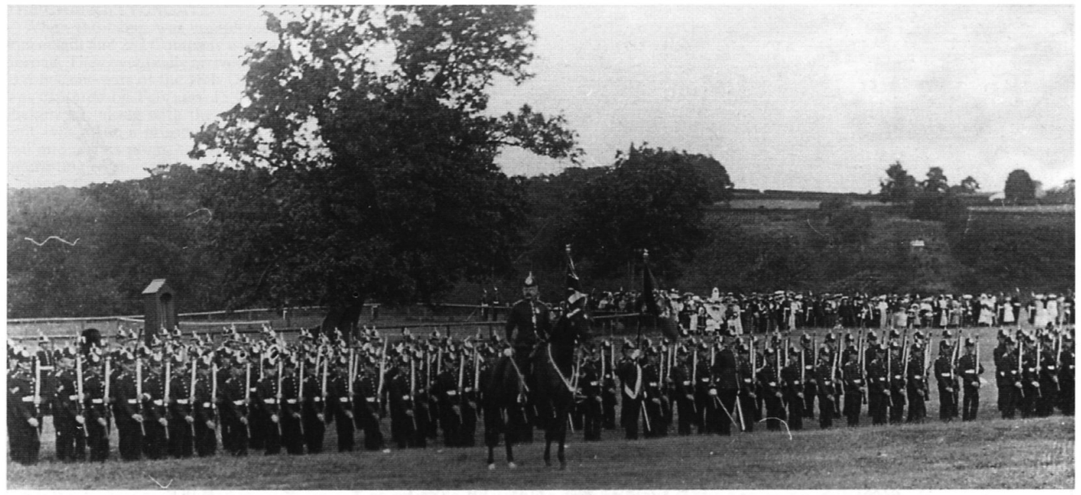
MILITARY BEGINNINGS

Military occupation of the area in modern times can be traced back to the middle of the 18th century when, under the command of the Earl of Darlington, the Durham Militia was formed in 1759. In 1853 this local unit was renamed the 1st or South Durham Militia. However, in 1803, in response to the Napoleonic threat, a local home defence force, the Teesdale Volunteer Infantry, was formed under the command of Colonel J. B. S. Morritt of Rokeby Hall.

Furthermore, another unit was formed locally in 1860 in Startforth which lies a mere 100 yards from the castle wall. The 7th North Yorkshire Rifle Volunteers were retitled in 1864 to become the 21st Durham Rifle Volunteers with headquarters in Barnard Castle itself. It is worthy of note that the boundaries of Durham and North Yorkshire divided Barnard Castle at what is still known as the County Bridge.



Top: **Deerbolt Camp 1897. The Durham Light Infantry are drawn up with their mounted commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel Richard Wilson, for Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee parade.** *Above:* **The same grassy meadow over 100 years later.**



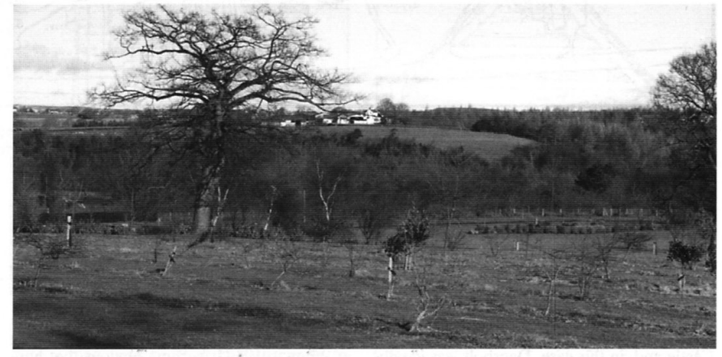
Old soldiers fade away . . . but the memory — and the oak — lives on! The same tree behind the contingent of the Yorks and Lancs still stands. Lieutenant-Colonel John Wilson, their CO, died of wounds in South Africa in 1901. (He was the son of Lieutenant-Colonel Richard Wilson.) Barnard Castle lies in the background.

THE TENTED CAMP

All of the units mentioned, and a large number of others used Deerbolt Park on such a regular basis that it soon became known as 'The Camp'. Throughout the years tented camps would appear for particular units visiting the area when modern training in all aspects of military skills were taught and practised. Even today, evidence of those early days can still be found. Musket balls of a variety of different calibres, a powder flask, spent projectiles from the Martini Henry rifle along with a wealth of other assorted small-arms ammunition from a more modern era have been recovered from the range which was first officially used in 1803 and eventually stretched 600 yards from the butts area towards the road.

A parade was held on the Deerbolt training ground in 1897 in honour of the Diamond Jubilee of Queen Victoria. From the description of the uniforms it was formed of the Durham Light Infantry, led by the mounted commanding officer, Lieutenant-Colonel R. B. Wilson. A second parade 'possibly commemorating the same event' was carried out by one of the battalions of The Yorks and Lancs Regiment.

In July 1905, Deerbolt was occupied by the 3rd Battalion of the Durham Light Infantry and on July 7 the CO, Lieutenant Colonel V. Grimshaw, unveiled a monument to the local men who had lost their lives in the Boer War. The red granite boulder he unveiled can still be seen in Galgate today.

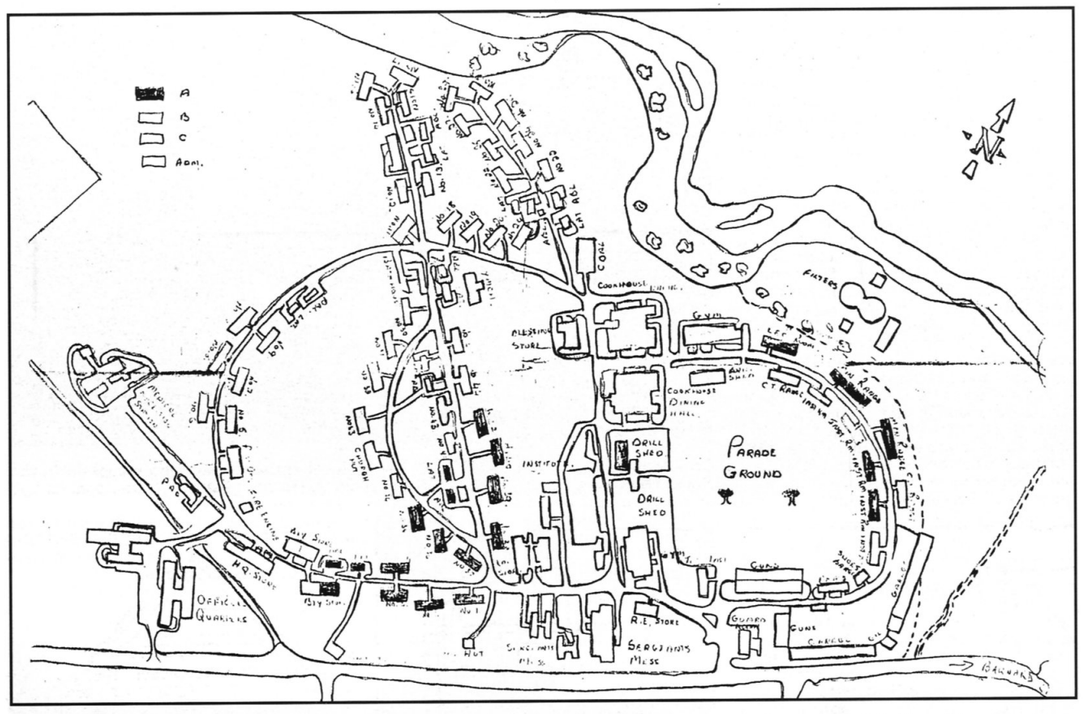


THE GREAT WAR

Monday, July 27, 1914 had been proclaimed a soldiers' holiday on the initiative of Sir John Lubbock. At Deerbolt training camp, the rank and file of the 3rd Battalion of Alexandra, Princess of Wales's Own Yorkshire Regiment (the Green Howards) were in residence and living in a tented camp. Sporting events were the order of the day and local people attended to watch the various competitions and the demonstrations of military skills. The Deepdale rifle competition had been completed and the track and field events were in full swing when, at exactly 1415 hours, a telegram arrived. The CO, Lieutenant-Colonel Robert Aspinall, was ordered to strike camp and move his battalion to its depot at Richmond 'with all

By 1910, 'khaki' (meaning dust-colour in Persian) service dress had replaced the scarlet tunics for everyday wear. Here, the 3rd Battalion, Durham Light Infantry, wearing Slade Wallace buff leather equipment, march through Barnard Castle to the camp.

The old mill in the background was demolished in 1976 and replaced by a commemorative stone on the site while the gable-ended building in the centre — once the Deerbolt Inn — is now a private house.


A
B
C
Adm.
Parade Ground
Drill Shed
Drill Shed
Officers' Quarters
R.E. Store
Sergeants Mess
Cookhouse
Gym
Courtyard Dining Hall
Institute
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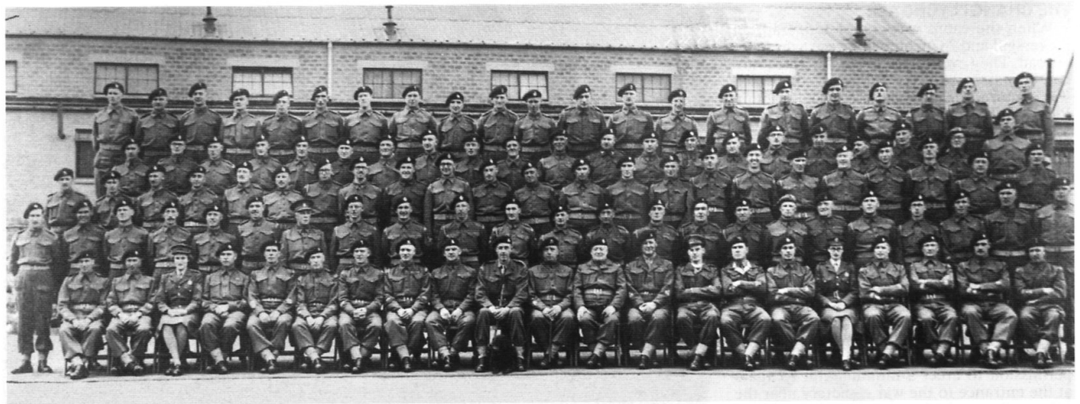
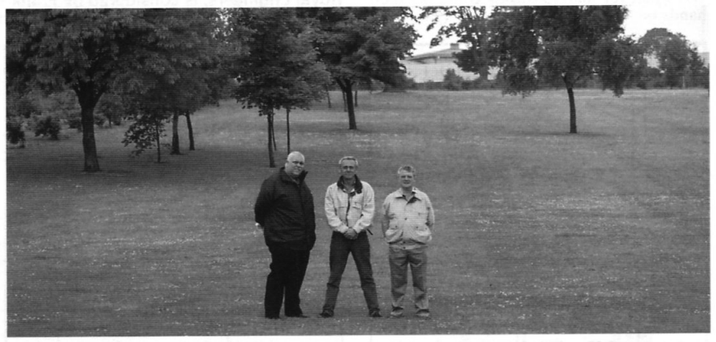


The inauguration of the 54th Tank Training Regiment, pictured in June 1942. The commanding officer — from the 18/21st Lancers — was Lieutenant-Colonel G. T. Hurrel. (Sorry we don't know the name of his dog!)

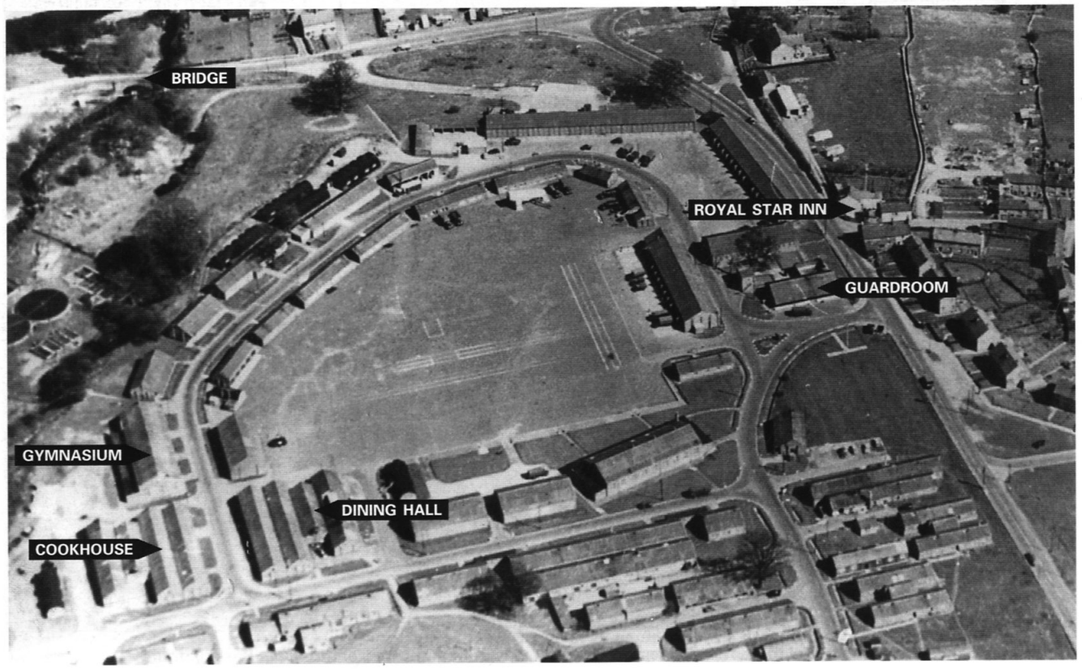
DEERBOLT AND ITS UNITS

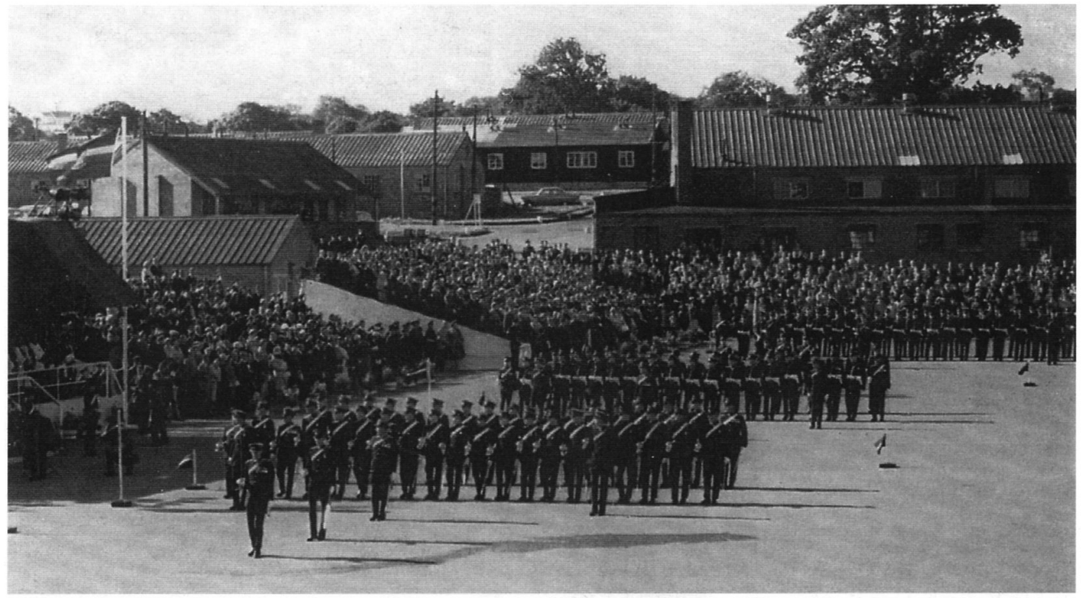
The first recorded unit to occupy Deerbolt camp during the Second World War was the 52nd Anti-Aircraft Training Regiment of the Royal Artillery but as the war progressed the units changed at frequent intervals. The artillery was replaced by a Royal Signals training unit which was in turn replaced by another Royal Artillery training regiment. In June 1942 it was the turn of the armour in the form of the 54th Tank Training Regiment of the Royal Armoured Corps. The regiment was commanded by Lieutenant-Colonel G. T. Hurrell of the 18/21st Lancers.

The scene was now set for what was to become the busiest period in the camp's history. With the armour came experienced 'tankies' who were to form the nucleus of instructors for countless other armoured regiments. The effects of the German Blitzkrieg had been felt and the lessons learned were passed on to the young and future armoured unit personnel. The permanent staff of this training unit consisted mainly of members of the Guards' regiments from what was to become the Guards Armoured Division.



The picture was taken in front of the long building on the bottom right of the parade ground seen in the aerial photo. On parade at the young offenders' prison today are (L-R) Tony Galley, public relations officer, Frank Smith, our author, and Barry Waldron.





A parade in 1959 by the 15/19th Hussars for Her Majesty The Queen who is taking the salute on the left. B Squadron is leading followed by C Squadron, the Guidon Party and then A Squadron. HQ Squadron has not yet come into view.

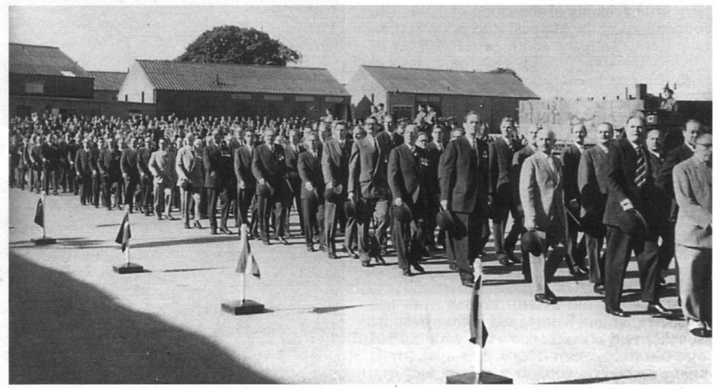
POST-WAR

With the cessation of hostilities in 1945 Deerbolt, like other camps in the area, saw a reduction in military activity. However, a military presence was maintained and in 1947 it was the turn of the 38th Training Regiment of the Royal Artillery which occupied the camp during one of the worst winters on record. Gunner 698 Parkes, T, better known as the cartoonist 'LARRY' explained to the author that the weather was so severe that other military units in the area, including the RAF staff at the chemical warfare facility on Bowes Moor, were sent home on indefinite leave. 'LARRY' was not so fortunate and recalled that the fuel supplies from other camps had to be 'liberated' to prevent a total freeze-up of Deerbolt. His Hut 27 benefitted insofar as the stove was kept hot by wood obtained by the demolition of a few surplus huts!

On December 21, 1953 the 1st Battalion of the Gloucestershire Regiment moved into Deerbolt and were placed on strategic reserve. Amongst its members were a number of ex-POWs of the Korean War and a drumhead service was held on the balcony of the Bowes Museum to commemorate those returned from captivity. In the words of an ex-member, David Pimm of Bristol: 'It was our best parade since arriving'. This parade saw Major-General Calquhoun, GOC for the Northern District, present Corporal K. Goodwin with the British Empire Medal for his activities in resisting his captors whilst a prisoner in North Korea.

In 1955 the Loyal North Lancashire Regiment was resident in Deerbolt when an act of concerted indiscipline took place. Little can be found in print that refers to this incident but from verbal accounts it resulted from the fact that most of the battalion had been granted a weekend pass. Those not so fortunate were detailed various training tasks, one being a map reading exercise which the participants decided was less important than a pint in the Castle Arms on the county bridge. This public house, now known as the White Swan, was a regular haunt of members of the battalion so it was quite obvious that the culprits were going to be discovered . . . which they were prior to being ordered out by the orderly officer and the duty guard with fixed bayonets. They were taken back to camp under close arrest, split into smaller groups and later court-martialled.

Not only have the servicemen marched into the pages of history but even the hallowed parade ground is no more, having been grassed over save for a small area retained as a car park. Note the same oak tree in the background.



In June 1959 the 15/19th Royal Hussars moved into the camp with the role of training National Service personnel destined to serve with various armoured units.

What do they say — once a Hussar always a Hussar? The parade ended with a march past of veterans of The King's Royal Hussars.

With the closure of Deerbolt in 1972, by the end of the year the camp had already taken on a sad air of neglect.

The end of military occupation of Deerbolt came about in 1972 when the camp was vacated for the last time. However, the Home Office Prison Department decided that good use could be made of the facilities by developing it as a Borstal, i.e. a prison for young offenders between 15 and 21 years. The locals were less than happy about this but they were placated when it was explained that the prison would only hold offenders guilty of very minor crimes.

Training was very much the order of the day and the occupants were treated in the nature of raw recruits as far as discipline was concerned. Many of the prison staff were ex-Servicemen and they began by instilling the young men in the basics of regular washing and shaving. Meanwhile, a building programme was set in motion to expand the establishment with new purpose-built residential units. Prisoners played a prominent part in this development especially in land clearance. It was not unusual for a scruffy, urchin-like junior convict to ask an officer what he had just pulled out of the ground which often resulted in the supervising staff persuading the prisoner to put the object down gently rather than to throw it. In those days the explosive ordnance disposal units were kept quite busy at Deerbolt!

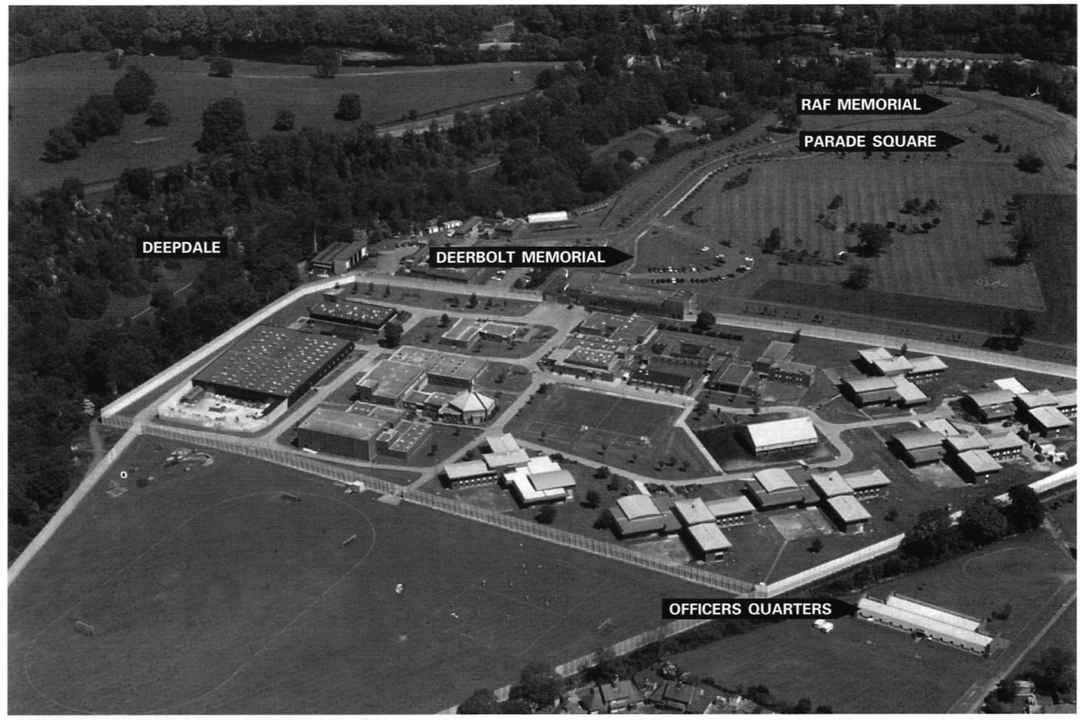
The Deerbolt prison of today can be seen on the high ground behind what was once the heart of the old camp. Apart from a small portion of the parade ground, some roadway and two buildings of the officers' quarters, very little remains of the camp of 1940. The foundations of the Medical Reception Station now lie beneath the south-eastern corner of the prison sports field and the hallowed parade ground now serves as the car park for visitors to the prison. The driveway from the main road to the prison gate is built upon the foundations of the indoor ranges, lecture rooms, gymnasium and cookhouse while the old officers' quarters buildings now serve as the training centre for prison personnel.

Deepdale range, now derelict, still exists with firing points still visible during the winter months when the foliage has died back, and the butts, though devoid of their target frames, are in very much the same condition as when they were in regular use.

Part of the old assault course area has been cleared and landscaped, although some trenches and obstacles covered with barbed wire can still be seen. This area is open to the public and is accessible by the path mid-way up the prison driveway. In fact the years of landscaping have resulted in the ground once again resembling the image it presented 200 years ago, with the unchanging features of the oak trees still dominating the ground.

Today nothing remains to mark the gate or guardroom so well known to the thousands of recruits who passed this way.

Going . . . going . . . gone! From 1973 . . . to 2001.



Today, with new buildings and modern facilities, Deerbolt has found a new lease of life as a young offenders prison.

DEERBOLT CAMP MEMORIAL

In the run-up to the end of the century, the author and a very small group of others looked at what could be done from Deerbolt as contribution to the town's millennium celebrations. It was decided that a gate guardian would be most appropriate to mark the history of the camp. The Quartermaster General was approached and his staff at Ashchurch said that they could provide a suitable specimen. One or two individuals, remembering the presence of the armoured corps at the camp, were of the opinion that a tank would best fit the bill but it was also remembered that Deerbolt hosted a vast range of other units during its history. Therefore a tracked 'battle taxi' in the form of an AFV 432 was finally chosen.

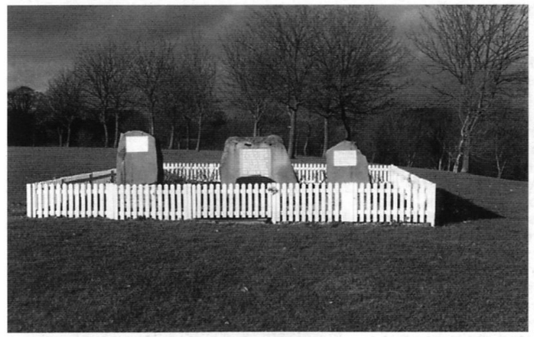
The vehicle arrived at Deerbolt and was refurbished by a local cadet force before being mounted on its plinth. A commemorative plaque was mounted on the facia plate of the vehicle which has been named *The Spirit of Deerbolt*. As Captain Pickersgill is regarded locally as the father of Deerbolt, the AFV was unveiled by his daughter, Mrs Cybil Shaw.

The author has spent many hours pacing and searching the now grassed banks on which the old camp stood and has discovered that this monument now stands on what was once the camp dining hall. Yes, there have been plenty of comments concerning the placement of a monument to those who survived the efforts of army cooks!

This monument like another one dedicated to the RAF is accessable to the public but the author would ask anyone wishing to see them that they first announce their intentions to the staff at the gate lodge.

Further information can be obtained from:

Officer F. T. Smith
Induction Wing
HMYOI Deerbolt
Bowes Road
Barnard Castle DL12 9BG
Telephone 01833 637561



Left: **A recently retired member of the prison service, and an authority on aviation history, saw his ambitions come to fruition on July 3, 1996 when a monumental stone was unveiled in memory of the aircrew who lost their lives whilst serving over Teesdale and the Western Pennines. Presiding over the ceremony was Lord Barnard, religious ministers from the RAF and Prison Service and representatives of the British Legion. The ceremony has since been held annually on the first Monday in July. For the ceremony in 2000, two additional stones were laid and dedicated to specific air crashes. Although the monuments are on prison property, members of the public can visit them as they are located on the high ground on the right-hand side of the approach driveway to the prison which was originally the camp exit from behind the vehicle sheds.** *Right:* **The *Spirit of Deerbolt* was unveiled on April 25, 2000 dedicated to 'the men and women who served at Deerbolt Camp in all arms of the military service of their respective country' from 1803-1972.**

Flying Officer Arthur Round.

Flight Sergeant Reginald Hopkins.

THE ICELANDIC BATTLE

By Squadron Leader Nick Barr

During the late summer of 1940, No. 98 Squadron, RAF, was sent to southern Iceland for the prescribed duty of 'co-operating with British forces in Iceland in the frustration of enemy invasion of the island'. On August 27, the first nine Fairey Battle aircraft landed at Kaldadarnes airfield after a five-hour 20-minute flight from the UK. Another nine Battles supplemented these aircraft on September 14. Conditions at Kaldadarnes were bleak throughout the Icelandic winter, with bad weather severely limiting operational flying.

On May 26, 1941, Flying Officer Arthur Round took off in P2330 with his navigator, Flight Sergeant Reginald Hopkins, en route for Melgerdi airfield, south of Akureyri. Their mission was to bring back to Kaldadarnes two colleagues, Pilot Officer Henry Talbot and Flight Sergeant Keith Garrett, who had been recovering on board a hospital ship at Akureyri after being injured in a road traffic accident.

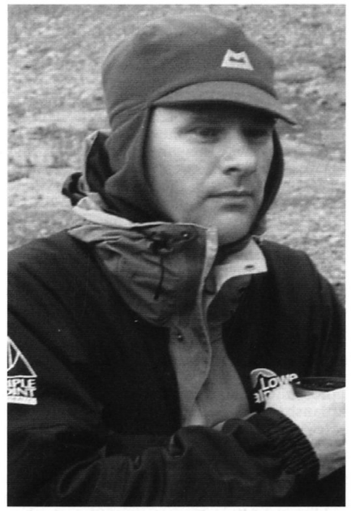
Having landed successfully at Melgerdi, the crew picked up their passengers and took off in light fog for Kaldadarnes. The aircraft was seen a short time later circling above Akureyri whilst gaining the necessary height to clear the mountains that surround the town but some 30 miles into its journey the Battle crashed into a glacier, killing all four personnel on board.

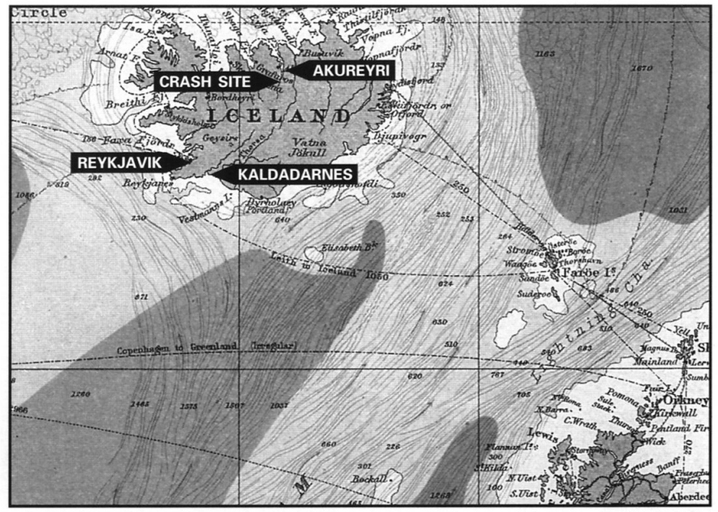
When the aircraft was reported as overdue, an aerial search was carried out but nothing was found. Some days later, Major Simms and a small contingent of military personnel engaged in a land search for the aircraft came across the crash site, high up in a remote glaciated valley. Due to the inaccessibility of the site, nothing was removed and a short service was held in memory of those who had perished along with the erection of a memorial cross.

Pilot Officer Henry Talbot.

Sue Raftree of the Central Casualty Section, RAF Personnel Management Agency, RAF Innsworth: 'Fairey Battle P2330 of No. 98 Squadron [similar to that *(above)* from No. 88 Squadron] crashed some 25 miles from Akureyri in northern Iceland on May 26, 1941 with the loss of two crew, Flying Officer Arthur Kavhan Round and Flight Sergeant Reginald Albert Hopkins, and two fellow squadron members, Pilot Officer Henry James Talbot and Flight Sergeant Keith Garrett, who had been convalescing on a hospital ship in Akureyri following a road traffic accident. The aircraft had been sent from its base at Kaldadarnes in the south but on the return journey it disappeared. A few days later the wreckage was located at the head of a small glacier at a height of about 1200 metres. A small team managed to get through and erect a cross before bad weather forced its return. On subsequent visits no trace of the wreckage could be found because of the perennial snow/ice conditions and, over the years, the circumstances and the crash site were effectively forgotten.'

Flight Sergeant Keith Garrett.





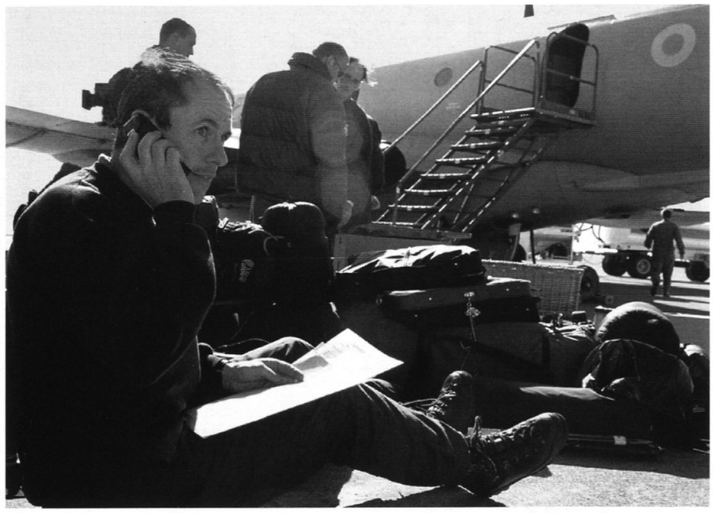
Sue Raftree: 'The case may well have been completely forgotten but for the intervention of an Icelandic historian, Hörður Geirsson *(left)*. He had heard stories of the crash and, over a period of some 20 years, he endeavoured to locate the site and do what he could to ensure a fitting burial for the four airmen. In August 1999, on his 13th visit to the area, and following an unusually long and hot summer, he was finally able to locate the wreckage and alert the RAF. It was my job in Central Casualty to notify the next of kin of the deceased by writing to old addresses we had on file and enlisting the support of the local and national press. The relatives of the last airman, those of the New Zealand-born pilot, were finally traced in July 2000.'

Some 40 years later, Hörður Geirsson, the photographic curator of the Akureyri Museum and a local aircraft historian, having heard of rumours of a crash in the local hills, decided to research the event and try and find the spot. Although there was some information on record, none proved to be that helpful in locating the exact position of the crash site.

Over the next 20 years or so, Hörður undertook many journeys to the local hills in the hope of stumbling across the site but all to no avail. It was not until the summer of 1999 that a chance discovery in London by one of Mr Geirsson's colleagues revealed an accurate latitude and longitude plot, which, when combined with the warmest summer for 30 years, led to the discovery of the wreckage.

After making a positive identification, some personal belongings were removed along with some human remains. These Mr Geirsson took to the British Embassy in Reykjavik who, in turn, contacted the Royal Air Force Casualty Branch at RAF Innsworth, Gloucestershire.

Sue Raftree from the Casualty Department made an initial informal approach to the RAF Mountain Rescue Service (MRS) in the hope that some assistance could be given to Mr Geirsson in an attempt to recover more human remains. This subject was then further discussed at the Team Leader's meeting at RAF Leuchars (Scotland) in late October and, due to previous liaisons between Nimrods and Iceland, as Mountain Rescue Team Liaison Officer at RAF Kinloss in Scotland, I volunteered to investigate further.



'The first task', explains Sue Raftree, 'was to ensure the recovery of the visible human remains from the mountain into the care of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. This was achieved through the British Embassy staff in Reykjavik, through Hörður Geirsson himself, and with the assistance of the Icelandic Coastguard who provided a helicopter to access the crash site. These remains were held by the local authorities pending the mounting of a full-scale expedition to the crash site. This task was handed over to the RAF Kinloss Mountain Rescue Team under Squadron Leader Nick Barr *(above)* who made plans to travel to Iceland during the anticipated fine-weather window in late August 2000.'

PRE-DEPARTURE ORGANISATION

Initial contact was made with Hörður Geirsson by E-mail and this became the most effective way of communicating with all parties, both in Iceland and the UK.

Provisional plans were made with Hörður, to undertake a recovery mission in the tight seasonal window for work on the glacier (mid-August to mid-September). Next, a Mountain Rescue Service composite team was selected. Contact with Peter Evans, the Deputy Head at the British Embassy in Reykjavik, was made and also with Lieutenant Ady King of the Icelandic Coastguard (ICG). Subsequently, a request for a Nimrod sortie to Iceland, diplomatic clearances, accommodation, transport, and sponsorship were all set in motion.

Prior to departure, establishing the availability of the aircraft, the production of press releases, undertaking radio interviews, acquiring the details of the next of kin and the fabrication of a memorial plaque took place. At the same time, 'D' Flight of No. 202 Squadron, having been briefed on the mission, were in the process of planning a Search and Rescue detachment with one of their Sea King helicopters to assist us in our mission.

Without a doubt, a good relationship with the Embassy in Reykjavik via Peter Evans smoothed out a lot of problem areas and he proved forever helpful. Furthermore, the decision to take out the RAF Kinloss Press and Community Relations Officer and the Scottish Press Relations Officer was to prove invaluable towards the end of the mission.

DAY ONE: FRIDAY AUGUST 18

Departure to the US airbase at Keflavik took place in a Nimrod on Friday, August 18, courtesy of No. 206 Squadron at RAF Kinloss. A bomb-bay pannier had been requested by the crew to accommodate our extra equipment and this proved to be essential. As we knew we were going to be met by a film crew, dress for the sortie was blue MRS trousers, light blue MRS polo shirt and Cotswold Outdoor Equipment sweat-shirts. Our flight lasted five hours 30 minutes (very similar to the flying time by the Battles in 1940) and formed part of a crew training exercise although the direct transit time could have been made in only two hours. The initial view of Iceland in good weather proved fascinating for those team members that had not seen the island before.

Upon arrival, unloading took some time and arrangements had been made prior to departure to ensure our vehicle would be delivered to the aircraft. This it duly was and the first of many loadings occurred. We also met up with the Icelandic documentary film crew, and they explained their role and intentions. From there we, along with the Nimrod crew, checked into the transit accommodation on the base.

A Nimrod from No. 206 Squadron was provided to transport the team and their equipment (together with two press relations officers) to the airbase at the Keflavik US Naval Air Station. L-R: Sergeant Jason Taylor, RAF Stafford; Corporal Dave Hughes, RAF Leeming; Squadron Leader Barr; Flight Lieutenant Danny Daniel, RAF Leuchars; Sergeant Ian Ellis, RAF Leeming, and Corporal Lee Purvis of the Photographic Section at RAF Lossiemouth who took the photographs reproduced in this article.

Keflavik airbase is a miniature version of America with all the usual trappings and food is readily available in the form of pizzas, burgers, etc.

DAY TWO: SATURDAY, AUGUST 19

During the planning phase, the ICG had kindly invited both the MRS Team and the Nimrod crew to view their facilities in Reykjavik and this offer was taken up by both parties, the drive from the airfield to Reykjavik taking about 45 minutes. This proved to be interesting and provided an insight into another country's Search and Rescue organisation. Furthermore, this was the day of the Reykjavik marathon and sharp pre-deployment planning had ensured that five of our six-man team had places in the ten-kilometre race to be held that afternoon.

The evening's events started off with a cocktail party hosted by Peter Evans at his house which enabled the team to meet key personnel and generally discuss the recovery plans. From there the evening centred on Reykjavik's 'Culture Night' with celebrations for both the marathon and the anniversary of Reykjavik being declared as Iceland's capital. A good night was had by all but food and drink is extremely expensive: a reasonable meal £40 and beer up to £6 per drink.

DAY THREE: SUNDAY, AUGUST 20

The long journey to Akureyri was undertaken with plenty of stops for drinks, petrol and photographs. The road is good and is paved all the way. Fuel is readily available and most petrol stations have associated cafes. The journey to meet Hörður took a little over six hours and the scenery is reminiscent of the north part of Skye or the Outer Isles.

We met him just on the outskirts of Akureyri and were then escorted to our accommodation which consisted of a small gym with good ablutions, including showers and a small kitchen.

Sunday was the day the Sea King helicopter from No. 202 Squadron was due to arrive from the UK but unfortunately other aircraft unserviceabilities meant that its departure had to be delayed for at least 24 hours. That evening we met the members of the Súlur MRT that would be accompanying us to the glacier who answered a lot of our questions and plan events for the next three days.

DAY FOUR: MONDAY, AUGUST 21

In the light of the absence of the Sea King, the decision from the night before was to wait for the ICG helicopter, at that time thought to be the Super Puma (ten-man capacity), which was due to arrive at 1100 hours. As events turned out, only a Dauphine could be released to assist us and it arrived at 1130 hours. Realistically, this only has a lift capacity of 3-4 personnel and as there were 19 of us, including the film crew, to transport to the site, the problems of time, fuel, etc, were obvious. Luckily, a Black Hawk from the base at Keflavik happened to be doing some local flying near Akureyri and whilst it had landed during a refuelling stop, the aircraft commander was asked whether or not he could help us. After some consultation with base ops, he was cleared to do a freight flight and managed to take all our rucksacks, camera and filming equipment and a 14 ft pole up to the site in one lift. Over a period of 90 minutes, all the personnel were taken to the glacier site and a base camp set up on level ground some 15-20 minutes walk from the crash site.

It had been arranged for No. 202 Squadron to provide one of their Sea Kings but unservicability problems meant that the team were without a helicopter lift facility. Fortunately, an American Black Hawk was operating locally and was 'impressed' into service!

Base camp *(above)* was established on level ground about 1000 metres from the crash site *(below)* which lay at an angle of some 15 degrees on the glacier. Save for one propeller blade, the wreckage was confined to a radius of 60 metres.

The crash site itself lay about a kilometre south-east of base camp and approximately 50 metres higher up. The wreckage lay 50 metres up from terminal moraine and was contained with a radius of 60 metres, with the exception of one of the propeller blades which was found 200 metres away in the direction of the base camp. The crash site itself is at the foot of a big permanent icefield stretching for 2-3 kilometres and is approximately 700 metres wide. The whole field lies at an angle of some 15 degrees and near to the top is covered in deep water-filled crevasses.

During the initial planning meeting on Sunday evening, based on the advice of people who had already been up to the site, it had been decided not to take crampons. Initially, this proved to be a good decision as weight and rucksack space were at a premium, but as the sun went down and the temperature dropped, the 15-degree slope proved to be very tricky to negotiate.

The Battle had obviously exploded on impact and there had been a substantial fire, evident by the significant amount of molten aluminium. This fact, when combined with 60 years in a moving glacier, meant that there was a lot of distortion to the wreckage and

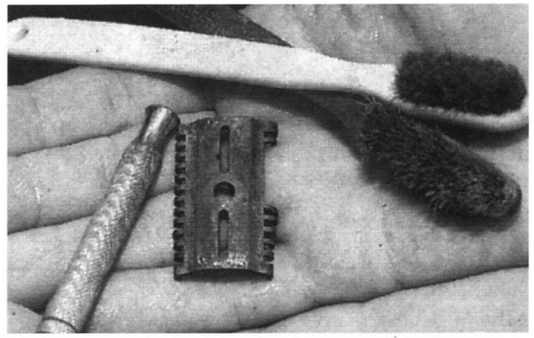
It proved almost impossible to dig through the hard-packed ice entombing much of the aircraft wreckage. 'We were at the mercy of the glacier', explains Squadron Leader Barr. 'We were elated at the beginning when we found the crash site but later felt terribly moved by the utter desolation around us. We could see how these four young men had lost their lives and it was very sobering. We were working in a very remote hostile environment. Every day was like the bleakest winter's day.'

many thousands of small pieces lay around on the surface. Hörður's aim was to tidy the site up whilst recovering as much of the human remains as possible. We also had to consider that the Press were due up to the site on the Thursday and they would require some photographic opportunities, so some of the larger wreckage was left in position and the human artefacts such as tooth brushes, boots, fragments of uniform, etc, were collected together for this purpose. Digging anything out of the glacier proved to be very difficult, as the ice just a few centimetres below the surface was extremely hard. Eventually, work was called off as evening fell and the work party returned to the base camp.

DAY FIVE: TUESDAY, AUGUST 22

Work continued on the second day at the crash site with the team progressing the clearing-up operations and further excavations. The weather was colder and more overcast than it had been, and the glacier was slippery. At midday, we were told that although the Sea King had left Lossiemouth, it had been recalled some 100 miles south of the Faroe Islands due to unserviceabilities in the UK. This was a disappointment as it meant that a lot of the extra work could not be completed, such as some underslung loads. Also with no helicopter support for Press transport, I elected to come down from the crash site with the Icelandic personnel that evening. The other five members of the team stayed up there and enjoyed another comfortable night.

Left: **One of the two Browning machine guns recovered.** *Right:* **More poignant, a burned fragment of uniform with the braid denoting the rank of flying officer, undoubtedly belonging to the pilot, Arthur Round. Arrangements had already been made by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission to combine any further human remains with those previously recovered and for these to be buried in a collective grave already earmarked in the war graves plot in Fossvogur Cemetery in Reykjavik — the capital of Iceland. Headstones engraved with the names of the four airmen had already been prepared as the burial was to take place before the relatives arrived for the dedication ceremony which had been organised for Sunday. Meanwhile, the Central Casualty Section at Innsworth had been working hard to assemble the next of kin and ten relatives were escorted to Iceland by Sue Raftree and Peter Edwards. They included Pilot Officer Talbot's brother John and his son Henry (who was named after his uncle); Arthur Fickling, nephew of Arthur Round; Kathleen Wyeth, Flight Sergeant Hopkins's half-sister; and Patricia Joinson, Flight Sergeant Garrett's niece, and her brother Keith, also named after the dead airman.**



Items recovered included much ammunition *(above left)* **. . . shaving kit** *(above right)* **. . . and flying boots** *(below)* **. . .**

DAY SIX; WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 23

Wednesday ended up as an office day for myself and proved invaluable in re-arranging and confirming timings for the press conference scheduled for the following day in Akureyri. The local police Chief Superintendent, Daniel Guðjónsson, was extremely helpful in providing an excellent office with all modern communications. Meanwhile, the Team up at the glacier were tidying up the last of the site and preparing to bring down the human remains which had been recovered and some of the wreckage. During their final work on the glacier, the team witnessed loud explosions and rumblings from directly under the crash site. These noises were heard several times and even the Icelandic personnel who experienced the phenomenon were suitably awe-struck. It was later thought that these emanated from the bowels of the glacier as it settled further. After this excitement, the team, plus local volunteers who had made their way up to the site in the afternoon, made their way back to the road with their loads, in good spirits.

The evening was spent being hosted by the Súlur team in a high, out-of-season ski lodge overlooking Akureyri. A few speeches and exchanges of gifts later, the team returned to the accommodation late that evening.

. . . and a piece of shirt still bearing a laundry mark. The watch had been given to the pilot as a birthday present.

IN MEMORY
OF
Flying Officer ARTHUR KAVHAN ROUND, RAF
Pilot Officer HENRY JAMES TALBOT, RAF
Flight Sergeant KEITH GARRETT, RAF
Flight Sergeant REGINALD ALBERT HOPKINS, RAFVR
Who tragically died when their Fairey Battle aircraft P-2330 of 98 Sqn.
crashed near Akureyri, Iceland on the 26 May 1941.
This memorial was erected by members of the RAF Mountain Rescue Service
during the recovery of the aircraft in August 2000.

A memorial plaque to mark the recovery operation was set up at Melgerdi airfield from where the Battle crew had departed nearly 60 years before.

DAY SEVEN: THURSDAY, AUGUST 24

This was the day of the press conference. Approximately 20 representatives from the British Press had been in Iceland for a couple of days and were now desperate to meet the team and, as they thought, get up to the glacier. However, due to the lack of the Sea King and further lack of any other hireable helicopter, the press were forced into making-do with meeting both the RAF and the Súlur teams at the Súlur team HQ in Akureyri. Although this proved frustrating for the Press, it did prove reasonably successful. The presence of the press liaison officers proved useful at this point and enabled the team members to not worry about press-related matters.

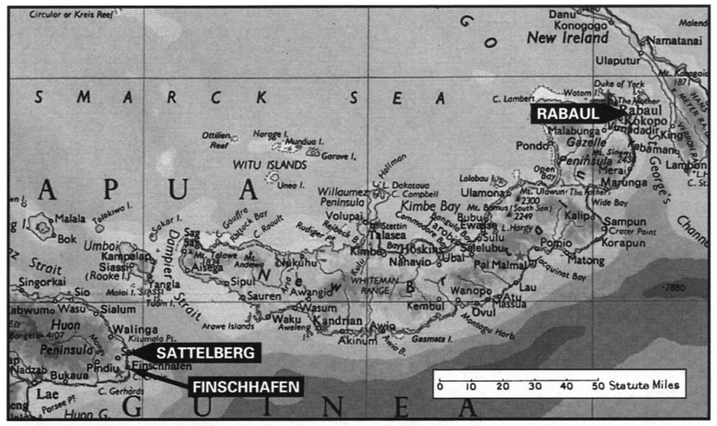
On completion of the press conference, the pressure was on to construct the memorial that would hold the plaque that we had brought from the UK. A site had already been found and it lay next to the airfield at Melgerdi from where the 1941 crew took off. After a lot of hard work, the memorial was finally finished in the fading light of the evening and is now there for everyone to see.

Sue Raftree: 'The relatives of the deceased airmen were flown to Iceland on Friday, August 25. Transportation from the airport at Keflavik and accommodation in Reykjavik was arranged by the British Embassy. Arrangements had also been made for the relatives to meet representatives of the media on Saturday and in the evening, Hörður Geirsson and the members of the Mountain Rescue Team spent time with the relatives to answer their questions concerning the recovery operation. On Sunday the party left the hotel for the church at Fossvogur for the commemorative service. We were met at the church by HM Ambassador to Iceland, James McCulloch, for the service which was attended by about 100 people including representatives from the Icelandic government, diplomatic missions in Iceland, international military staffs, the Icelandic Coastguard and numerous local dignitaries. After the service, at which the readings were given by the Ambassador and Squadron Leader Barr, the entire congregation moved to the cemetery where Mr McCulloch laid a wreath on the central memorial. This was followed by the laying of official wreaths in front of the four headstones which mark the collective grave by RAF and Icelandic Coastguard officers (headed by Group Captain Steve Skinner, the Station Commander at RAF Kinloss) and family tributes by the attending relatives. A lone piper played a lament and, with perfect timing, a Nimrod accompanied by an Icelandic Coastguard Puma helicopter carried out a slow fly-past. At the reception which followed at the Ambassador's Residence, Hörður formally returned the pilot's watch to his nephew. In reply, Mr Fickling made a short speech on behalf of all the relatives thanking everyone connected with the family visit. Further presentations followed: the Ambassador presented war medals to the family of Flight Sergeant Garrett, Mr Edwards presented a shield from the RAF's Personal Training Command (PTC) HQ to Hörður in acknowledgement of his work on the project, while I presented an HQ PTC shield to the Ambassador in acknowledgement of the Embassy's support and assistance.'

Left: **Corporal Hughes, Sergeant Ellis and Sergeant Taylor pay their respects before the graves (Nos. 17-20) in Row 46 of Plot C.** *Above:* **Sue Raftree places a bouquet of red roses on behalf of Nancy Poole, the girlfriend of Flying Officer Round.**

On Sunday, August 27, the Team met up with the Kinloss Station CO, a Kinloss piper, the press liaison officers, next of kin, various dignitaries and other interested personnel, for a moving ceremony that included a church service and a short blessing at the four headstones, all enhanced by a Nimrod and ICG Super Puma fly-by.

After the reception, representatives from each of the families gave short interviews to an Icelandic television unit. The party then returned to the cemetery, which was now deserted, where they were able to spend time at the graves in quiet contemplation. Top row L-R: Philip Round (nephew); John Talbot (brother); Kathleen Wyeth (half-sister of Flight Sergeant Hopkins); Clive Round (nephew); Paul Goodwin (a relation of Flying Officer Round); Pat Joinson (niece of Flight Sergeant Garrett); Harry Talbot (nephew of Pilot Officer Talbot); Chris Barnes (son of Kath Wyeth); Keith Slaney (brother of Pat Joinson), and Arthur Fickling (nephew of Flying Officer Round).



BRAVERY IN NEW GUINEA

By Phillip Bradley

In September 1943, the Japanese position in New Guinea had taken a severe turn for the worse. Following the seizure of Salamaua and then the lightning strikes from the air and sea to capture Lae, General MacArthur's eyes roamed further north-east along the coast where the fine natural harbour at Finschhafen beckoned. From this base he could readily strike New Britain both from the sea and air, and thus isolate the Japanese nexus of Rabaul. Finschhafen would be another key stepping-stone to victory.

MEDAL OF HONOR AT FINSCHHAFEN

Finschhafen was a natural harbour and airfield site on the east coast of New Guinea within striking range of the main Japanese base at Rabaul. In late 1943, the Allies wanted it, and after embarking from the beaches just to the east of Lae during the previous night, the Australian 20th Brigade made its landing north of Finschhafen in the early hours of September 22. The main landing was to be at Scarlet Beach between the Song river at its northern end and the Siki river to the south. However the first two waves of the landing force came ashore further south at Siki Cove. Amongst them was Nathan Van Noy, Jr, a young private from Idaho serving with the US 532nd Boat and Shore Regiment, who headed up to Scarlet Beach to get the range lights and beach signs put in their proper place for the proceeding waves.

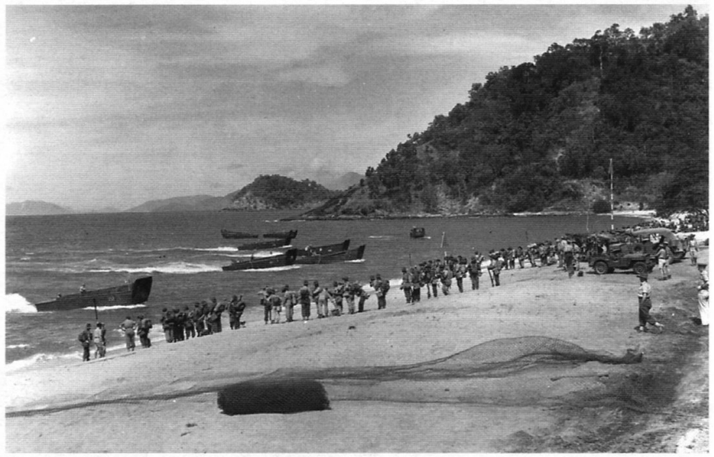
Resistance was sporadic, the enemy withdrawing to stronger positions in the foothills at Katika behind the coastal zone. The Australian 20th Brigade, veterans of El Alamein and more recently the assault on Lae, had secured their foothold by day's end. And by September 25 the 2/17th Battalion had pushed up into the hills below the dominating heights of Sattelberg only to find the area strongly held.

Pushing south against heavy opposition, Finschhafen was cleared on October 2 and the 20th Brigade met up with 22nd Battalion troops moving up the coast from Lae. The Allies now had access to the finest natural harbour on the New Guinea coastline and what would be become one of the largest airbases in the South Pacific. These put them within easy striking range of the Japanese lynchpin of Rabaul. And the Japanese knew it.

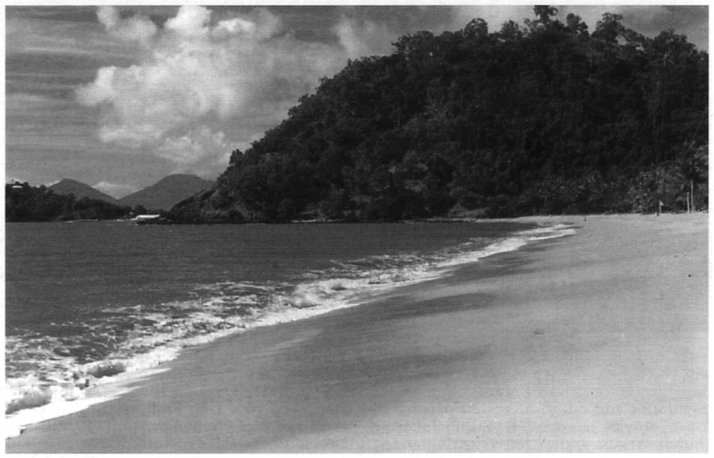
But the key to securing Finschhafen lay in driving the enemy out of the ranges overlooking the base. And Sattelberg, a former German mission station at the top of the range, was the key to the position. Already the 2/17th Battalion had come under heavy pressure from the enemy on the road up from the coast and by October 3 the 2/43rd Battalion had moved up towards Sattelberg to where the Japanese had blocked the road, isolating one of the companies in Jivevaneng.

At dawn on October 16 the Japanese hit back hard, attacking the 2/17th at Jivevaneng and then in an audacious move the next morning attempting to land three barges full of infantry at Scarlet Beach. Sighting the enemy barges off the Song river mouth, the Bofors anti-aircraft guns on the beach opened up along with supporting fire from 2/28th Battalion infantry and .50-calibre machine guns belonging to the 532nd Boat and Shore Regiment.

At the time of the enemy landing Private Nathan Van Noy was manning a .50-calibre Browning, only five yards from the water's edge. One of the enemy barges had been hit by a 37mm gun during the approach and retired back to the north. But the other two beached only ten yards from Van Noy's position. The barges had crept in during the early morning darkness and were now below the line of fire of the Bofors gun. Holding his fire until the Japanese barges were committed to landing under the very nose of his camouflaged position, Van Noy was able to direct a withering hail of fire at the enemy troops as they disembarked. One grenade exploded in the gun-pit, shattering Van Noy's leg and also wounding his loader, Corporal Stephen Popa. But Van Noy remained, ignoring calls to pull back, and continued to flay the Japanese troops pinned down at the water's edge. A second grenade landed, almost blowing off one of his legs and badly damaging the other, but still he fired. Then a third grenade exploded, and the gallant soldier fell dead, his finger still on the trigger of the Browning. In front of their landing craft lay 39 of the enemy, the majority accounted for by Van Noy. His action would be recognised by the award of the Medal of Honor, the first American engineer in the Second World War to be so decorated. A year later when a new type of port repair ship was launched it was christened the *Junior Van Noy*.



Trinity Beach, north of Cairns in Australia, was the training ground for the Australian 9th Division prior to the amphibious landings at Lae and at Finschhafen in eastern New Guinea. The photo was taken in August 1943. (AWM)



Phillip Bradley sought out the same unspoiled beach in January 1999.

Above: **Scarlet Beach, the 9th Division's landing site north of Finschhafen. Here LSTs are unloaded on the day of the landing, September 22. In the foreground is the Bofors gun that later engaged the Japanese barges on October 17 but found itself unable to depress sufficiently at such close range. Private Van Noy's position was on the beach in the middle distance. (AWM)**

Such are the scenes of bravery . . . 57 years on.

Left: **Private Nathan Van Noy, Junior, Medal of Honor.** *Right:* **Another view of Scarlet Beach showing two of the shot-up Japanese barges from Van Noy's action. (AWM)**

Matilda tanks from the Australian 1st Tank Battalion moving up from the coast on the road below Jivevaneng. Photo taken on November 17 as the accompanying infantry from the 2/48th Battalion prepared for the Sattelberg assault. (AWM)

during a lone assault on the Japanese bunkers. Like his great mate Tom Derrick, Ranford held the DCM and had also been mentioned in despatches twice and held three Royal Humane Society awards for saving lives. Ranford's death undoubtedly affected Derrick who was on the following day placed in command of No. 11 Platoon in 'B' Company. The platoon had lost their commander, Lieutenant Max Robinson, and their platoon sergeant, Norm Badham, in the earlier fighting and were glad to have Derrick in command.

When it was found that the approach road was blocked by a landslide and in any case was too difficult for tanks, Captain Dean Hill's 'B' Company were sent across the deep ravine through dense rainforest to attack via precipitous slopes on the right flank. Derrick's platoon led the assault. Due to the nature of the country, the only possible approach to the town lay through an open kunai patch situated directly beneath the top of the cliffs. 'B' Company was not in position until 5.30 p.m. and for the next two hours Nos. 10 and 12 Platoons vainly tried to clamber forward against fierce machine-gun fire and a deluge of grenades from above.

Then No. 11 Platoon tried an approach from further east. Derrick wrote about it in his diary:

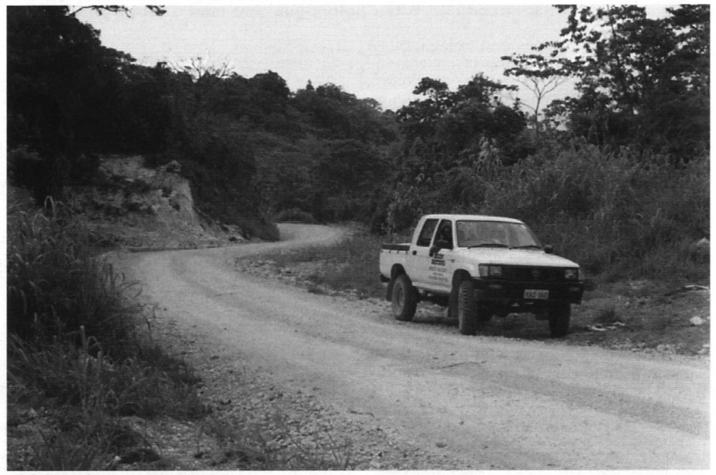
'First look at the ground made the task a suicide one. Jap bunkers on top could fire down on us and drop grenades down, a very sticky position indeed. Decided to give it a go, using 4 and 5 Sections. The move off required great courage and nerve and not a single man hesitated. The slope was exceedingly steep and each man had to have assistance to get started on the upward climb.'

But shortly before last light it appeared that it would be impossible to reach the objective or even to hold the ground already occupied and the brigade commander ordered Hill's company to retire. But Derrick's men had begun to make progress. Derrick had shot down two Japanese in a forward foxhole, and Don Spencer had knocked over another. Then a bunker had been cleared out with Bren gun fire and Derrick's men were up for more. Derrick came back to

VICTORIA CROSS AT SATTELBERG

It was near the end of November that another exceptionally brave action was played out during the assault on the Japanese ridgetop stronghold of Sattelberg. The Japanese 80th Regiment had strongly fortified the already dominant terrain and had sworn to defend it till the end. Pushing on from Jivevaneng the Australians had run into a series of strongly fortified ridges along the road to Sattelberg. Further north, other attempts to move on Sattelberg had run into similar opposition. At Jivevaneng, Matilda tanks had been brought up for the next assault, and the South Australian 2/48th Battalion, veterans of the North African campaign, had been given the task of taking the enemy fortress. But it took a week of fierce fighting with tank support before the South Australians were in a position to capture Sattelberg.

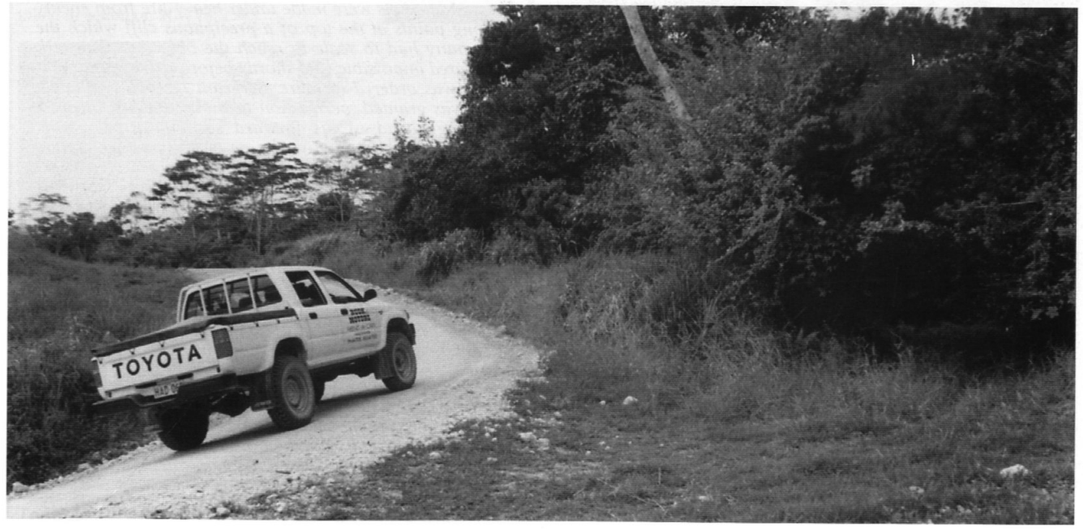
It was fighting of the fiercest kind, with three tanks forward each in concert with an infantry section. Sergeant Tom 'Diver' Derrick, who had previously won the Distinguished Conduct Medal in the North African campaign, was in the forefront of the fighting with 'A' Company. On November 20 the Australians lost one of their finest soldiers when Sergeant Snow Ranford was killed



Japanese relics found during the widening of the road through Jivevaneng: water bottles, utensils, a bayonet scabbard, buckles and a dangerously corroded grenade.

Above: **Privates Wightman and Waye shelter beside the track as a Matilda moves forward.** *Right:* **As the tanks advance, the wounded are moved back to the rear. (AWM)**

Below: **The line of the original road can be seen on the right, the new one around the ridge having been moved slightly to the left.**



Left: **The final sharp bend on the original road into Sattelberg showing the difficulties the tanks faced in moving along it.** *Right:* **Today the original road has been bypassed but the outline of the gully is evident above the overgrown track.**

the phone to speak to Dean Hill, the company CO. 'I think we can get forward, we've done over about five posts.' But Hill told Derrick the orders were to break off and try a different approach the next day. But 'Diver' Derrick was adamant. 'Bugger the CO! Just give me 20 more minutes and we'll have this place. Tell him I'm pinned down and can't get out.'

Now Derrick went forward, taking with him a haversack of grenades with the pins fixed so that they could be easily triggered. The men behind him gave him Bren and Owen gun cover as he clambered across a precipitous slope, at times hanging onto vines as he threw the grenades into the enemy positions. He was brave but calculating and with an extraordinary ability to throw his grenades accurately into the bunker apertures of the enemy posts. And when necessary he reverted to his rifle and used it with similar effect despite being under constant fire. The fallen logs across his path were a great danger to him as each time he clambered across them he was skylined for the enemy riflemen. Following in file along the narrow spur behind him, the rest of the platoon made as much noise as they could to distract the enemy. Derrick accounted for eight enemy bunkers and 15 defenders before reaching the kunai patch below the ridge crest. The hold was tenuous, but the platoon was now in dead ground below the second line of enemy defences.

The Japanese commander had already given instructions for his defenders to abandon Sattelberg if absolutely necessary and Derrick's action had unhinged their position. Despite other intact posts that could still halt Derrick's men higher up, the enemy abandoned their positions that night. 'B' Company heard heavy fire going over their position all night, and had expected a counter-attack, but the enemy fire was only masking their withdrawal and morning patrols out to either flank found the mission station deserted.

Sergeant Tom 'Diver' Derrick, DCM, VC, one of Australia's finest soldiers. Derrick had the honour of raising the Australian flag from a shattered tree over Sattelberg. Later commissioned, the army broke the rules in reposting him back to the 2/48th Battalion and he was later killed on Tarakan at the head of his platoon. Lieutenant Derrick's grave lies in the Labuan War Cemetery off the coast of West Borneo. (AWM)

VICTORIA CROSS

SERGEANT THOMAS DERRICK, DCM

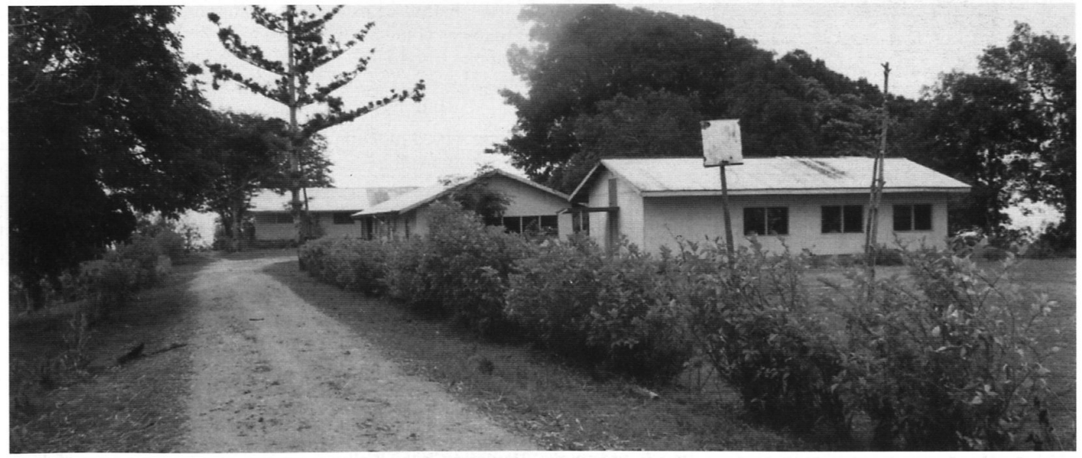
Australian 2/48th Battalion

On 24th November, 1943, Sergeant Thomas Currie Derrick, DCM, was in command of a platoon of a company of Australian infantry ordered to attack a feature from the township of Sattelberg. For over two hours many unsuccessful attempts were made under heavy fire from enemy strong points at the top of a precipitous cliff which the company had to scale to reach the objective. The task appeared impossible, and shortly before last light the company was ordered to retire. Sergeant Derrick requested, and was granted, permission to make one last attempt. Moving ahead of his forward section he personally destroyed with hand-grenades an enemy post which had been holding up this section. His second section were heavily attacked by machine guns and grenades from six enemy posts. Without regard for his personal safety he went ahead of the leading men and with grenades so completely demoralised the enemy that they fled leaving weapons and grenades. The company was thus enabled to gain its first foothold on the precipitous ground. Then on four separate occasions Sergeant Derrick dashed forward and threw grenades at a range of five to seven metres until the remaining three posts were silenced. In all he reduced ten enemy posts, and from the vital ground he captured the battalion moved on and took Sattelberg. Undoubtedly the capture of Sattelberg was due to Sergeant Derrick's fine leadership and refusal to admit defeat in a seemingly impossible situation. His outstanding gallantry, thoroughness and devotion to duty were an inspiration not only to his platoon and company, but to the whole battalion.

Above: **Sattelberg after the battle. (AWM)** *Right:* **The cairn at Jivevaneng marking the Australian assault on the far ridge.**

Colonel Robert Ainslie, whose order Derrick had disobeyed, insisted Derrick raise the Australian flag over the captured mission. Max Thomas, a mate of Derrick's from 'A' Company, went over the route Derrick had blazed up the ridge and told him: 'Hell, you'll get another gong for this, Diver'. Derrick came back at him, 'I might catch up with Tex now'. Tex Weston, a 'C' Company sergeant, held both the DCM and MM. For his outstanding action, Sergeant Tom Derrick was awarded his nation's highest honour, the Victoria Cross.

Tom Derrick returned to Australia to be commissioned and then the army broke all the rules to appoint him back to the 2/48th Battalion. On Tarakan Island he once more led his men forward to take apart Japanese defence lines, utilising section-based fire-support tactics to deadly effect only to be killed in action on May 24, 1945.



Today the mission has been rebuilt on the former field of battle.

55*29' N, 104*32' W,

Neufeld Bay

Churchill River

Named in Memory of

Leslie A. Neufeld

1st Canadian Parachute Battalion, Pte. L74243

Killed in Action, June 6, 1944, Age 22

Normandy, France

And in Honour of the Work of his Pioneer Parents

Anna & Henry G. Neufeld

Nipawin, Saskatchewan

On June 4, 1944, Leslie wrote to his parents
...The time has come for the invasion of France...
I'll be in the first one hundred Canadians to land by parachute...
If anything should happen to me, do not feel sad or burdened,
but take the attitude

"He served his country to his utmost"
With that spirit I am going into battle.
And let it be known that the
Town of Nipawin did its share to win the war...
My trust is in God...
Your loving son, Leslie

'Do not feel sad', wrote Private Leslie Neufeld to his parents in Nipawin, Saskachewan, a few days before his death in Normandy. 'This job is dangerous, very dangerous. If anything should happen to me take the attitude of "he served his country to his utmost".' A paratrooper with the 1st Canadian Parachute Battalion, Private Neufeld was amongst the first Canadians to land in France. The official records state that Leslie lost his life on June 10 but when his brother began to research the circumstances of his death he came to question the date. A veteran of the battalion, Don Hartigan, describes in detail how Leslie came to lose his life in his book *A Rising of Courage* and he confirms without any doubt that he was killed on June 6. Early that morning, at the gatehouse of the Château de Varaville, Corporal Winslow Oikle, with Leslie as his second in command, took a PIAT to the first floor to get a clear shot at a 75mm gun in a concrete bunker. The round fell short and the German replied scoring a direct hit which detonated the remaining PIAT rounds killing both men. In the explosion, Major Hugh MacLeod and Lieutenant Hugh Walker were also killed — their dates of death being correctly recorded as June 6.

COMMEMORATING SASKATCHEWAN'S WAR DEAD

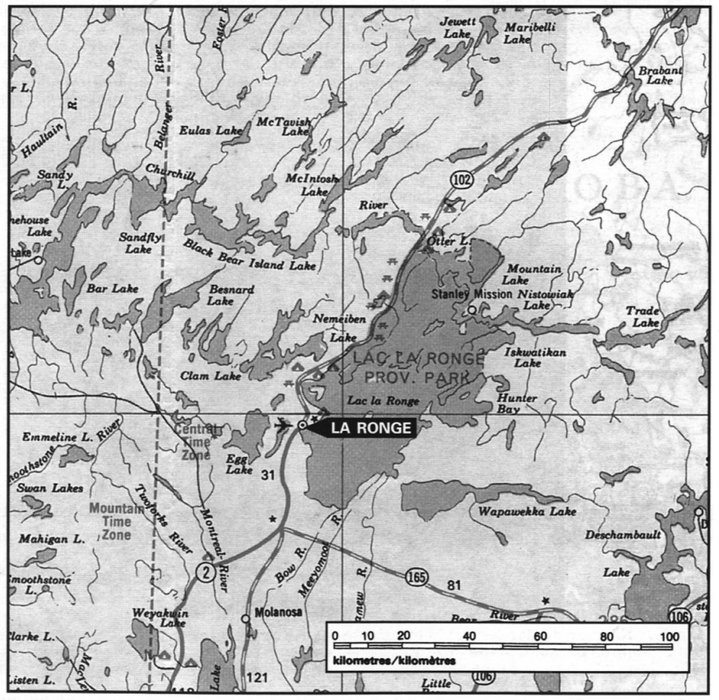
During the Second World War, 780,000 Canadians were mobilised of whom over 42,000 lost their lives. Of these, 3,800 came from Saskatchewan, the sixth largest of the 10 provinces which make up Canada.

After the war the provincial government launched a programme to name geographical features in the territory after each of their war dead. From 1950 to 1970, 'geo-memorial' locations in the northern area of the province were chosen for each of the fallen servicemen — a lake, island, river or other physical feature — as a lasting tribute.

Although at the time the Saskatchewan government tried to inform the next of kin about the location of their memorial, many relatives were still unaware of this unique act of remembrance — that is until Doug Chisholm, an aircraft mechanic living at La Ronge, was approached in August 1997 by a friend from Regina who wanted a photograph of the island named after his brother who had been killed during the war. Doug was the ideal contact as he possessed a 1954-vintage Cessna 180 float-plane which he kept on the lake just across the road from where he lived, and he was also in the process of looking for ways and means in justifying its upkeep.

He consulted his maps and found Soutar Island — named after Pilot Officer James Soutar of No. 219 Squadron, RCAF, who was killed on August 18, 1942 and is now buried in Kiel War Cemetery in Germany — and Doug brought back a photo . . . and also a yearning to know more: 'Who was this Soutar and where was he from?'

It was at this point that Doug discovered the existence of a list of all the 3,800 geographical features named after fallen servicemen and it set him thinking just how many other relatives were aware of the fact or might be interested in photographs of their loved one's memorial.



Doug Chisholm *(top)* **is based at La Ronge in the northern part of the territory and this partial map extract gives a graphic example of the way Saskatchewan's natural features have been given an entirely new meaning.**

Left: **Flying Officer Daniel D. Platana from Regina, Saskatchewan.** *Right:* **The lake named in his memory lies 45 kilometres east of La Ronge. Daniel's son Terry writes that 'following the war, my mother and I came to Regina to live with my father's family. From my arrival here as an 11-month-old in February 1946 and our becoming part of a new family, Remembrance Day became a regular and anticipated part of my life each year. I remember the early years, watching my grandfather proudly marching in the parade of veterans. He died in 1969 having served in two world wars but still I see his face. I see the faces of the Silver Cross mothers, and I see the face of my grandmother, dead seven years but still very much a part of my memories. I see the faces of young officer cadets from the military colleges and I am reminded that my father and his crewmates were their age when they died. Remembrance Day over the past 52 years of my life has brought me some of my most painful memories and, at the same time, memories of immense gratitude and appreciation for those who gave so much. Remembrance Day 1997, more than any in the past, was a day of special memory for me. It was a day not so much of memories from long ago but of August 20 that year, the day we buried my mother's ashes in my father's plot in Ancerville, France. In her last years, my mother suffered from Alzheimer's disease and had little short-term memory, but she did have some wonderful recollections of her younger years and, in particular, of the brief time while married to my father. She spoke more than ever of the father I had never known and who had never even been aware that she was pregnant. I had been waiting for some time to write his story and could never find the right way to begin. I thought I might begin by talking about how when my grandmother died, I received her collection of letters, every one my father had written from the time he had enlisted in 1941 to his death in 1944. I thought about beginning with his letters home to his parents telling them about the wonderful young WRAF he had met. Then I thought I might begin by the entry in his well-worn small pocket diary with the entry on December 12, 1943:"Met Sadie Sharpe. A swell kid. Bags of fun", or the entry on June 5, 1944: "Got married in Felling. Happiest man in the world". I looked through his log books and thought of beginning with the final entry by an unknown hand on July 14, 1944: "Operations over Revigny. Failed to return". I thought also of beginning with the all-too-familiar letters to my mother and my grandparents advising them that my father was missing. I thought of beginning with the search I started in 1980 trying to find someone who might have known him during the years he served with No. 425 (Alouette) Squadron in Italy, North Africa and Dishforth in England, or for someone who might have had any contact with him during the time he served as a 21-year-old RCAF air gunner with the Pathfinder Force as part of No. 156 Squadron, RAF. Remembrance Day reminded that there is rarely, if ever, just the right way or time for some things.'**

Remembrance the Saskachewan way. In 1999, Doug Chisholm landed his floatplane on Platana Lake, and with Terry, a Provincial Court Judge in Ontario, and Terry's wife Madeline. They explored the shoreline by boat. 'We found a wonderful hillside plateau looking out over Platana Lake', says Doug. 'Powerful images of 1944 emerged — and the sacrifices that were made — and plans are underway to return to that spot to place a bronze plaque in tribute.'

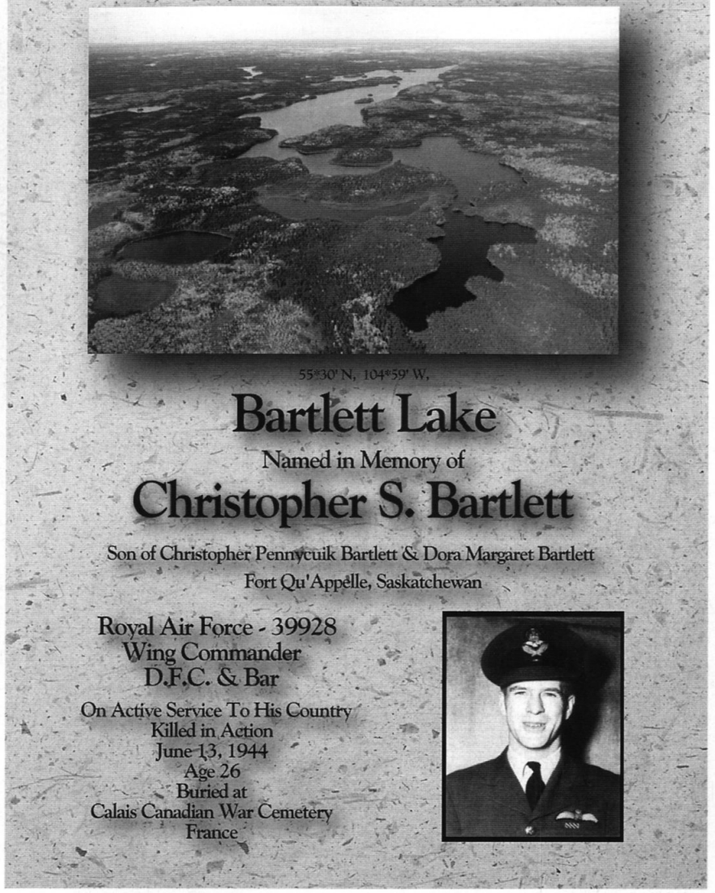
Wing Commander Christopher Bartlett, the CO of No. 434 Squadron, was shot down on the night of June 12/13, 1944 on a bombing mission against communications targets at Arras, France. His Halifax crashed at Givenchy-en-Gohelle killing all but one of the seven-man crew. The beautiful lake named after him lies 40 kilometres north-east of La Ronge and, in the summer of 1999, Doug visited the lake in the company of 15 members of the Bartlett family when a bronze plaque was placed in his memory.

To photograph all the sites would be a monumental task — let alone a costly one — so Doug sought to cover his expenses by producing a tribute for each serviceman comprising a photo of the individual, his geo-memorial, as well as biographical details, his date of death and home town, etc. For a modest fee ($100), these would be provided nicely framed to next of kin. To this end, in 1998 Doug formed Woodland Aerial Photography based at La Ronge and since then he has photographed 2,700 locations — in one week in September 1999 covering 625 in 36 hours flying time.

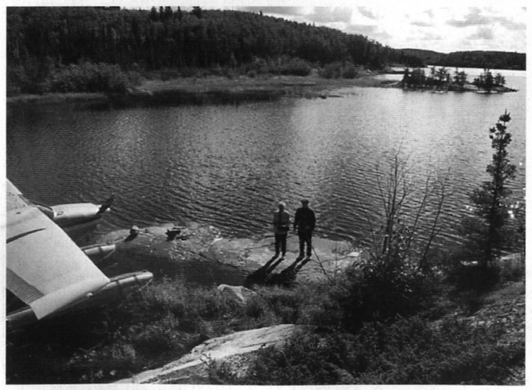
To date, Doug has prepared over 450 of his special tributes. 'A lot of people are moved by them and the recollections they bring', says Doug. 'I think people appreciate the fact that they are able to see a photograph of the geo-memorial location and then see it on a map. When I first tried to contact families, I felt like a vacuum cleaner salesman. A lot of people didn't know what to think but, as time went by, it unravelled by word of mouth.'

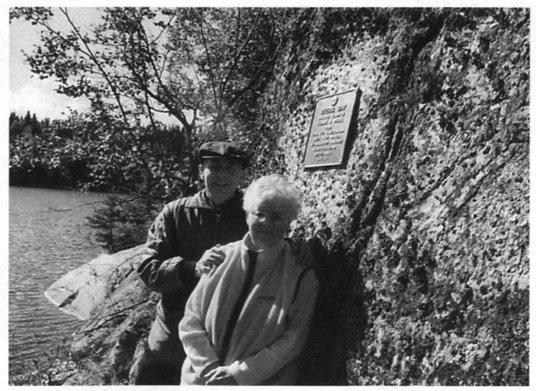
Doug is currently preparing a book for the Canadian Plains Research Centre in Regina which will cover some 80 of the tributes he has prepared. (Titled *Their Names Live On* it will be published in November 2001.) One of these tributes remembers Pilot Officer Vernon W. Byers from Star City, Saskatchewan, the pilot of AJ-K of No. 617 Squadron, whose Lancaster was shot down near the Dutch island of Texel en route to attack the Ruhr dams (the subject of *The Dams Raid Through the Lens* just published by *After the Battle*) on the night of May 16/17, 1943. 'I have an excellent aerial photo of Byers Bay on Trout Lake and flew there with Vernon's brother and sister to place a bronze plaque on the shore', says Doug.

Doug says that he is continually amazed at the way families open up to him and give him information. 'Each family deals with their loss in their own way and some of their stories are really moving. I thought I knew a lot about the war because my father and uncles were in it but I now realise that I didn't know much at all, although I am learning a lot.'



To contact Doug Chisholm write to P.O. Box 846, La Ronge, Saskatchewan, S0J 1L0. Phone (306) 425-3186 or you can E-mail to woodland.photos@sk.sympatico.ca





A similar plaque was fixed to a rock at Byers Bay, named after Pilot Officer Vernon Byers missing on the raid to knock out the German dams on May 16/17, 1943 (see *The Dams Raid Through the Lens*). In August 2000, Doug flew to the lake with Vernon's brother and sister, Glen Byers and Marjorie Temple. At the time, the family had no knowledge of how or where Vernon died, only a telegram saying that he had been posted 'missing in action'. It was not until Paul Brickhill's book and the Dam Busters film appeared that they became aware of the circumstances surrounding his death. Vernon's Lancaster crashed in the Waddenzee and only the body of the rear gunner was recovered. The rest of the crew are now commemorated on the Runnymede Memorial, Pilot Officer Byers on Panel 175. Doug Chisholm's tribute to Vernon Byers is reproduced overleaf.

55*39' N, 105*14' W,

Byers Bay

Churchill River

Named in Memory of

Vernon W. Byers

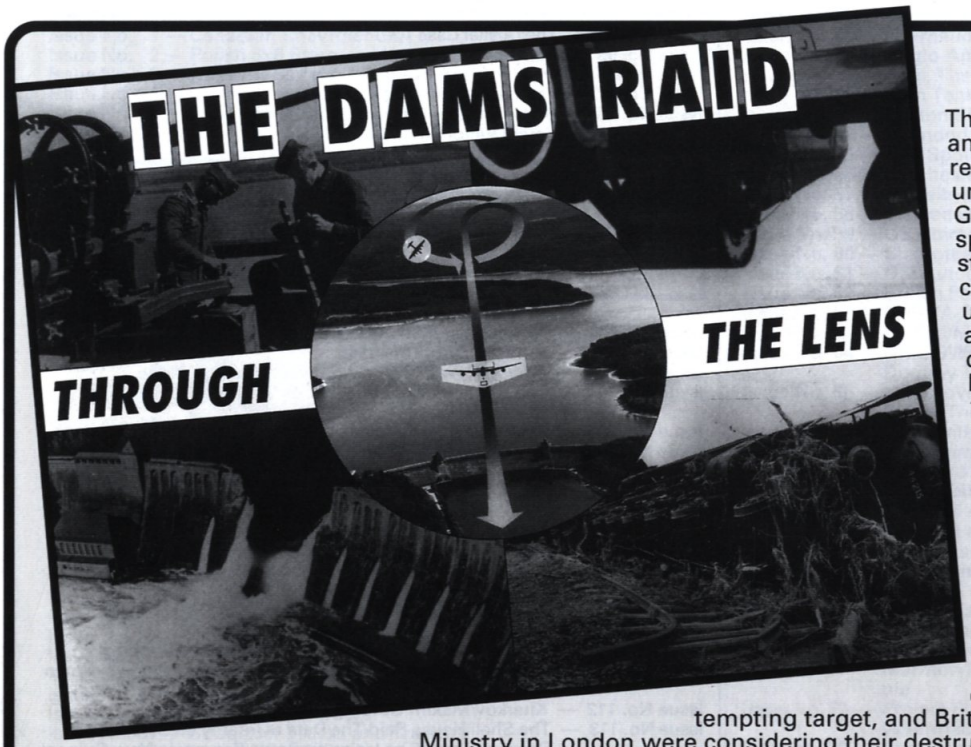
Star City, Saskatchewan

Royal Canadian Air Force
#617 Dambuster Squadron
Pilot Officer, J17474

On Active Service To His Country
Missing in Action
May 17, 1943
Age 23

AFTER THE BATTLE

AFTER THE BATTLE



BY HELMUTH EULER

The story of the attack on the Möhne and Eder dams in the Ruhr has been recounted many times before but not until now has it been told from the German side. Helmuth Euler has spent over a third of a century studying the raid and its consequencies, collecting an unrivalled archive of documents and photographs, and producing documentary films on the attack. His book *Wasserkrieg* (literally 'Water-war'), published in Germany in 1992, has now been translated and adapted for this *After the Battle* edition in the 'Through the Lens' series.

The waters of the Ruhr were essential for the manufacture of steel and hence for the German armament industry as a whole. This, coupled with the hydro-electric power which they generated, made the dams controlling these waters a tempting target, and British military planners at the Air Ministry in London were considering their destruction as far back as 1937. Six dams on the Möhne, Sorpe, Ennepe, Lister, Diemel and Eder rivers figured on Bomber Command's target list — the first five due to their importance to the steel industry and the latter because of its role in controlling water levels along the River Weser and the Mittelland Canal, both of which were linked to the inland waterways supplying war materials throughout the Reich and to the Eastern Front. If the reservoirs could be emptied of water, together with the elimination of the power plants, the German war machine would be delivered a body-blow . . . or at least that was the theory.

Barnes Wallis was not the first to consider the problem but his was the brilliant idea that led to the breaching the dams. The plan gave rise to the formation of No. 617 Squadron, an elite unit under Wing Commander Guy Gibson, for precision bombing and special operations involving a high degree of flying risk. The night of May 16/17, 1943, saw the opening of 'the Water Front' as bouncing bombs ripped open the giant Möhne and Eder dams during spectacular low-level attacks. Dozens of road and railway bridges were swept away, hundreds of buildings destroyed, waterworks and power stations put out of action, and almost 200 square kilometres of land flooded and laid waste.

During the course of Germany's longest night, some 1,400 people lost their lives — the largest number of victims in the air war to date. Eight of the 19 Lancasters that took off on Operation 'Chastise' failed to return with the loss of 56 crewmen.

The attack on the Möhne, Eder and Sorpe dams made world history. Now over 400 rare photographs, documents and compelling eyewitness accounts show the background and consequences of one of the greatest catastrophes to strike Germany in the 20th century.

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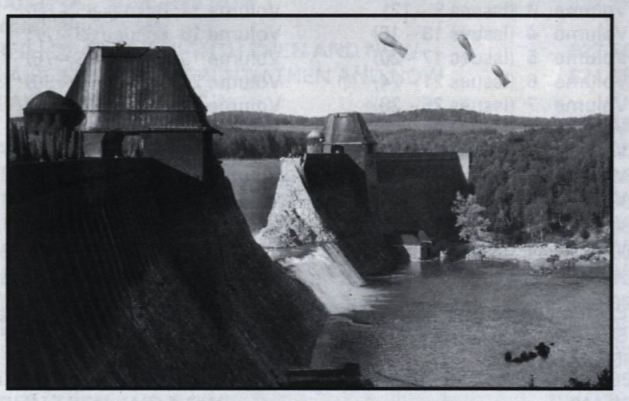

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